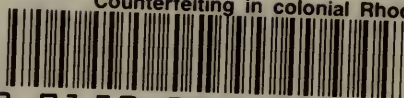


hbl, stx

HG 336.U52R46

Counterfeiting in colonial Rhode I



3 9153 00549194 1



HG
336
U52
R46

COUNTERFEITING
IN
COLONIAL RHODE ISLAND

PUBLICATION COMMITTEE

RALPH S. ANTHONY, *Chairman*

FRANCIS H. CHAFEE, M.D.

HOUGHTON P. METCALF, JR.

PAUL C. NICHOLSON, JR.

LAWRENCE C. WROTH

COUNTERFEITING IN COLONIAL RHODE ISLAND

BY
KENNETH SCOTT



THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND

1960

ALL RIGHTS RESERVED BY
THE RHODE ISLAND HISTORICAL SOCIETY

PRINTED IN GERMANY
AT J. J. AUGUSTIN · GLÜCKSTADT

TO MY WIFE

PREFACE

In this absorbing account the author has been able to bring to life the activities of counterfeiters of another day and the danger they represented to the orderly operations of their government. It is obvious that a great amount of research was necessary in order to obtain the details of these events and to present them so as to picture the feeling of the times with regard to the offense of counterfeiting.

This book again shows that counterfeiting is as old as society itself and that the urge to "get something for nothing" is found in some people in all eras. It is noted herein that even some of the Indians of colonial Rhode Island had learned to counterfeit wampum, which was the money of their people.

Counterfeiting is a twofold crime, for it not only steals from the victim the purported value of the counterfeit piece, it steals from him and all who know of the loss a far more valuable and precious commodity – the confidence that every good citizen has in his government and its money, and in its desire to protect him from loss. No doubt, it was, in part at least, a realization of these things that caused the authorities of colonial times to devise the fearful punishments of that day in the hope of deterring others from engaging in the crime. It seems well established that the gravity of the offense was as well – perhaps better – understood then than it is now.

It is the responsibility of the United States Secret Service to suppress counterfeiting and to maintain the integrity of the nation's money. It is our belief that the danger from present day counterfeiters may well be even greater than it was in colonial times. We have advanced beyond the extreme punishments of those days, but it is still necessary that the offense be vigorously investigated and that offenders be swiftly and severely dealt with when they are apprehended.

In this publication the author has performed a most worth-while public service in preserving for the study of this and future generations a scholarly and authentic account of the activities of counterfeiters and their impact on the society of colonial Rhode Island.

U. E. BAUGHMAN
Chief, U. S. Secret Service
Treasury Department

INTRODUCTION

The writing of this volume has been made possible through the kindness of the staffs of The Rhode Island Historical Society, the Newport Historical Society, the New-York Historical Society, the offices of the Clerks of Court of Kent, Newport, Providence, and Washington Counties, Miss Mary T. Quinn of the Office of the Secretary of State in Providence, and Mr. J. Benjamin Nevin of Providence. Illustrative material has been made available through the courtesy of Mrs. Clarkson A. Collins, Jr., the Connecticut Historical Society, the American Antiquarian Society, and the Newport Historical Society. The author is indebted to Miss Constance D. Sherman, of the American Museum of Natural History, who read the galley proof.

I wish particularly to express my gratitude to Clifford P. Monahan, Director, and Clarkson A. Collins, 3rd, Librarian, of The Rhode Island Historical Society for their many suggestions and corrections.

It is hoped that this book will be of interest to numismatists, economists, sociologists, and historians. Based as it is chiefly upon unpublished records and concerned with many individuals, it should be of special value for genealogical research. The subject matter has been treated chronologically, and any subdivision into chapters has seemed unnecessary.

COUNTERFEITING IN COLONIAL RHODE ISLAND*

The earliest counterfeiting in Rhode Island was of the wampum, which served the Indians as money and was used by the earliest white settlers as well. It consisted of cylindrical pieces of shell drilled through the center, polished on stones, and strung on threads like beads. There were two kinds, one made from the blue eye of the quahog shell and the other from the white periwinkle. Of these the

* The following manuscripts are found in the Office of the Secretary of State, Providence:

Accounts Allowed
Colony Agent's Account Book
General Treasurer's Account Book
R.I. Colony Records
R.I. Records of Governor and Council
Letters
R.I. Petitions
R.I. Journals of the Senate
R.I. Reports to the General Assembly
R.I. Equity Court File Papers

Abbreviations used are as follows:

O.S.S.	= Office of the Secretary of State, Providence
<i>R.I. Col. Rec.</i>	= <i>Records of the Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations</i>
NCSC Min. Bk.	= Minute Books, Newport County Superior Court (mss. in courthouse in Newport)
NCSC Files	= Newport County Superior Court Files (mss. in courthouse in Newport)
KCSC Min. Bk.	= Minute Books, Kings County Superior Court (mss. in courthouse in South Kingston)
KCSC Files	= Kings County Superior Court Files (mss. in courthouse in Providence)
Kent CSC Min. Bk.	= Minute Books Kent County Superior Court (mss. in courthouse, East Greenwich)
PCSC Min. Bk.	= Minute Books Providence County Superior Court (mss. in courthouse in Providence)
PCSC Files	= Providence County Superior Court Files (ms. in courthouse, Providence).

dark variety was priced at twice the white, and the value of the shell money was governed by the price of beaver skins in the London market.

The Indians dyed the white beads black, thereby doubling their value, and Roger Williams likewise charged that the redskins counterfeited the dark wampum with "stone and other materials." The General Court of Electors of Rhode Island in May, 1647, ordered that false strings of wampum offered by the Indians in exchange or barter should be confiscated to the general treasury, and in 1682 the General Court of Commissioners declared that since the wampum had sunk to so low a rate that it could be considered only as a commodity, it was unreasonable that it should be forced in payment on any man.¹

Perhaps the first contact of the Rhode Island authorities with a white counterfeiter occurred in 1705. The previous year it was discovered that a gang in Massachusetts had been forging the twenty shilling notes of that colony. Among those involved were two blacksmiths, Peregrine White, Jr., (the son of Peregrine White, *Mayflower* baby and first-born New Englander of English parentage), and his son Benoni; a carpenter named John Brewer; and Daniel Amos, a wine-cooper. The leader in the affair was Thomas Moyran, alias Morton, alias Odell, an Irishman of middle stature, of a slender and straight body, with black hair and thin visage. Eventually this rogue, after whom there was a hue and cry and for whose capture a reward of £30 had been offered by Governor Dudley of Massachusetts, was seized in Philadelphia. The *Derick Adolph*, on which the counterfeiter was being transported in irons, touched at Newport, where, on the night of Thursday, May 31, he somehow loosened his fetters, got ashore, and lay concealed in a barn two miles out of town until June 6, when he was taken up and safely conveyed in the sloop to Boston.²

Rhode Island's first emission of paper currency was voted in 1710. The bills were printed on what was apparently ordinary ledger paper

¹ Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America* (N. Y.: Oxford University Press, 1957), pp. 13-14.

² *Ibid.*, pp. 28-30.

from crudely engraved copper plates.³ The law for their emission provided that counterfeiting or defacing the notes should be a felony, punishable "by cropping of ears, whipping, fining at discretion, and imprisonment for twelve months."⁴

A few months later, on November 27, 1710, the Assembly passed a new law of broader scope, for it was voted that persons convicted of counterfeiting the bills of Massachusetts, New Hampshire, and Connecticut should be liable to be cropped, whipped, fined at discretion, and imprisoned according to the nature of the offense. The act stated further: "If any such offender shall happen to be found within this colony, which hath so done in any of the neighboring governments, such offender or offenders, being taken shall, at the request of the respective governments whereto he or they did belong, and against whom the more particular injury is done, such offender shall be delivered up to be punished according to the laws made and provided in the government, for such offenders."⁵ Double damages were likewise to be paid to persons defrauded, and any convicted counterfeiter whose estate was insufficient to pay such damages and the costs of prosecution and imprisonment was to be set to work or sold for any term of years at the discretion of the judges of the court where he was tried.

Five months after the law of November 27, 1710, a new measure was passed which provided that a convicted passer of forged bills of Rhode Island, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, or Connecticut should forfeit such bills found upon him, pay a fine of forty shillings, be imprisoned for ten days and, when released from prison, should give a bond for his good behavior, according to the discretion of the judges. A fine of forty shillings was also to be imposed upon anyone

³ Elisha R. Potter and Sidney S. Rider, *Some Account of the Bills of Credit or Paper Money of Rhode Island* (Providence: Sidney S. Rider, 1880), pp. 9-10; Richard LeBaron Bowen, *Rhode Island Colonial Money and Its Counterfeiting* (Providence: Society of Colonial Wars, 1942), pp. 9, 11, 12.

⁴ *R.I. Col. Rec.*, IV, p. 97.

⁵ *Id.* IV, pp. 105-106.

who saw a false bill in another's possession or had knowledge of one being passed but failed to report the fact to the authorities.⁶

In March, 1711, a certain Thomas Booker was indicted at the Superior Court in Newport for counterfeiting a Connecticut bill of credit, numbered 441, of the emission of 1709, but the petty jury brought him in not guilty.⁷ It was, indeed, extremely difficult to obtain a conviction, not only in Rhode Island but in the other New England governments as well.

Two years after the trial of Booker three inhabitants of Newport, Frelove Lippencott, her husband Robert, and Edward Greenman, Jr., (the son of John Greenman) were arrested and charged with counterfeiting the three shilling sixpenny bills of Massachusetts. Frelove had six counterfeit plates made in England for the £3 Rhode Island bill; the 10s. of Connecticut; and the 3s., 3s. 6d., the 20s., and 50s. of Massachusetts. At the court held in Newport in September, 1713, the grand jury brought in the indictments *ignoramus* (no bill), whereupon the court, on advice of the General Assembly, held the prisoners for appearance at the next court, to be held in March, 1714. Bail was set at £1,000, but it is not recorded whether bonds were furnished.

Apparently in March the grand jury again failed to bring in indictments against the Lippencotts, while the sheriff reported that Greenman had broken jail and escaped. He was indicted on two counts, for having counterfeited the 3s. 6d. bills of Massachusetts and for having passed a 50s. note of the same province. The court declared the fugitive an outlaw and sentenced him under the law for passing to pay a fine of forty shillings.⁸

In March, 1715, a transient person, Henry Cooke, was indicted in Newport for having passed off a counterfeit £3 Rhode Island bill. He was tried, convicted, and sentenced to pay a fine of forty shillings, with costs of prosecution and officers' fees, to make restitution of three

⁶ *Id.* IV, pp. 117-118.

⁷ Min. Bk. A, NCSC, p. 191.

⁸ Richard LeBaron Bowen, *op. cit.*, pp. 33-35.

pounds to the aggrieved party, and to furnish a bond of ten pounds, with one surety, for his good behavior during his stay in Rhode Island.⁹

According to the testimony of a widow named Elizabeth Stowards this same Cooke appears to have been associated or at least acquainted with a gang of counterfeitters consisting of Captain Edward Greenman, his two sons, Silas and Edward, Jr., all of Kingstown; a cooper named Joseph Atwood and a cordwainer named Samuel Vaughan, both of Newport; Joseph Jones of Boston; a tailor named Thomas Banks and John Andrews of Connecticut. The three Greenmans were, in the words of the governor of the colony, men of "Considerable Note," for the captain had been a deputy, an assistant, and speaker of the House of Deputies, while Silas was a deputy and in 1718 was a justice of the peace. These three and Atwood were arrested in 1718 and jailed in Newport, charged with making false money from the six previously mentioned plates which they secured from Frelove Lippencott. The importance of the Greenmans called for energetic measures to secure their conviction. For this purpose Atwood was accepted as king's evidence against them, while Massachusetts sent Jones and Connecticut Banks as witnesses against their former accomplices. Jones received a reward of £150 and Atwood £50 for their testimony, while it is probable that Banks likewise was given a compensation. Since it was suspected that several counterfeiting plates were still undiscovered, the Governor and Council on October 15 offered a reward of £50 for every plate that should be seized and a like sum for every person discovered and convicted.

The three Greenmans, realizing the hopelessness of their situation, pleaded guilty to their indictments. The captain was sentenced to stand in the pillory and have his ears cropped or to pay a fine of £600 and furnish a bond of £700 for the payment of double damages and further to pay costs in his case. Captain Greenman's son Silas was condemned to stand in the pillory and be cropped, or to pay a fine of £300 and costs and to provide a bond of £400 for payment of

⁹ Min. Bk. A, NCSC, p. 224.

double damages. Edward Greenman, Jr., received the same sentence as did his brother Silas. Silas, after his punishment, removed to Stonington, Connecticut.¹⁰

Some idea of the extent of counterfeiting by the Greenman gang is afforded by the fact that in August, 1722, there were in the hands of the governor £957/14s. of their false bills and in the hands of the general treasurer £116/15/06. All of these counterfeits were burnt as was the general practice in colonial times. From the money collected from the three Greenmans various officials were paid for their services in the affair, while Massachusetts was reimbursed for the £150 bestowed upon Joseph Jones for the discovery of the counterfeit plates.¹¹

After the conviction of the Greenmans the authorities detected no further counterfeiting in the colony until 1723, when their attention was directed to two separate affairs, that of the Chapins and that of Mary Peck Butterworth and her associates. The governor then issued a proclamation offering pardon to any one or two counterfeiters who should discover a confederate and a reward of £50 for securing the conviction of a forger of the bills of any New England government.¹²

The Chapins, two cousins, Abel and Samuel of Springfield, Massachusetts, became involved in roguery in a peculiar way. Samuel, chancing to be present at the trial of a noted counterfeiter, Ovid Rushbrook, heard where this rascal had concealed his plates, went quickly to the spot, and laid hold of them. One plate was cracked, but with the other Samuel betook himself to a swamp and printed off twenty £5 Massachusetts bills, which he induced his cousin to sign. In May, 1723, the pair set out from Springfield for Newport, each with ten of the false notes in his wallet. Samuel was detected when

¹⁰ The evidence about the Greenman ring is given in full in Richard LeBaron Bowen, *op. cit.*, pp. 39-42; R.I. Records of Governor and Council, 1667-1753, pp. 94-95; Petitions 1, p. 50.

¹¹ *Ibid.*, pp. 58-62, and *R.I. Col. Rec.* IV, pp. 248-249, 257, 263, 271, 297, 300, 314, 317-318, 364. Edward Winslow and James Allen of Boston exchanged and brought to the General Treasury some £ 410 of the counterfeits (R.I. Colony Records 4, p. 272).

¹² R.I. Records of Governor and Council, 1667-1753, p. 110.

passing one counterfeit, and Abel was searched when his cousin was observed to slip him his pocketbook. They were tried on September 11, when both were convicted of passing. Each was placed in the pillory, cropped, and required to pay double damages and costs, while the eighteen counterfeits taken from them were burnt.¹³

A much more serious ring of counterfeiters was headed by a woman, Mary Peck Butterworth, of Rehoboth, Massachusetts. The story of how in 1716 she began to make bills in her kitchen has been recounted elsewhere,¹⁴ but it should be briefly mentioned that Mary's brother, Nicholas Peck, was tried and acquitted at Newport in September, 1716, when he was charged with putting off a false £5 Rhode Island note. Mary and her gang, however, continued their work undetected until Arthur Noble, one of Mary's husband's carpenters, went over to Newport on July 18, 1723, to witness the hanging of twenty-six convicted pirates. In Newport he encountered three young women from Rehoboth whom he treated at an inn, paying the score to Elizabeth Wair with a counterfeit £5 Massachusetts bill. He was detected, removed to Bristol in Massachusetts for examination and then sent back to Newport to jail.

As a result of his revelations another of the gang, Nicholas Kamp, was taken up and examined as a witness for the crown, and soon thereafter Mary Butterworth, her husband, John, Jr., Israel Peck, Nicholas and Hannah Peck, Daniel Hunt, and Hugh Beatties were taken into custody. None of the organization seems to have been convicted and a grand jury even returned Noble's indictment *ignoramus*. The one good result of the business was that Mary ceased her emission of counterfeits. Kamp had voluntarily appeared before the Governor and Council of Massachusetts as a result of a proclamation promising pardon and a reward of £50 to any informer.¹⁵

¹³ Kenneth Scott, "The Counterfeiting Venture of Abel and Samuel Chapin," *Rhode Island History* XI (1952), pp. 93-95; R.I. Colony Records 4, p. 437.

¹⁴ Richard LeBaron Bowen, *op. cit.*, pp. 63-81; Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 64-67.

¹⁵ *Boston News-Letter*, Aug. 22, 1723, p. 1.

Although Mary Butterworth and her passers ceased their operations, other counterfeiters were soon at work, and it was discovered by June, 1726, that the £5 and the 40 shilling bills of Rhode Island, emitted in 1715 and 1721, had been counterfeited by an engraved plate or plates, so that the General Assembly ordered them all recalled, to be replaced by bills to be struck from new plates. The old notes were to be no longer legal tender after May 1, 1727.¹⁶ James Franklin, Benjamin's brother, with an eye to business, in May, 1728, sent to the Assembly a detailed account of why the paper money was so easily counterfeited and stated that he could print emissions in such a way that they could not be forged successfully, but the legislators ignored his proposal.¹⁷

The guilty parties in this instance do not seem to have been detected but the authorities did lay hands on a gang of counterfeiters in 1729. On January 7, 1729, Samuel Hallet, Nicholas Otis, a tailor, and David Richards, Jr., drew up and signed a covenant to make and pass counterfeit Rhode Island bills, of which no one of the partners was to put off more than twenty shillings a week. They swore on the Bible to carry out all terms of the compact, which closed with the words, "God save the King prosper our Progress herein and Preserve us from all Traytors." Some two weeks later two wives, Hannah Hallet and Joanna Otis, joined the band and signed a postscript to the agreement. These conspirators had their plates made by John Brown of Newport, engraver, who presently got cold feet and denounced the band to the government. He had engraved the actual plates for genuine bills. For his informing he received a reward of only £25 instead of the usual £50. By June, 1729, Brown was faced with imprisonment for debt.

The five counterfeiters were arrested, but Nicholas and Joanna Otis alone were convicted. Nicholas was sentenced to stand in the pillory and have his ears cropped, but his wife, who had a choice of being cropped or paying a fine, escaped corporal punishment when her relatives furnished the cash.

¹⁶ *Id.*, Dec. 8, 1726, p. 2.

¹⁷ R.I. Petitions 1, p. 25.

Richards' first indictment was quashed because in it he was designated as David Richards, merchant, whereas it was his father David, Sr., who was a merchant. Although he admitted that he had signed the bills, the trial jury found him not guilty. The court thereupon expressed dissatisfaction with the verdict and sent out the jury again, but the jurors a second time brought Richards in not guilty. Samuel Hallet, a mariner, and his wife were both tried and found not guilty, although the evidence against them was damning and although, after the first verdict, the court expressed dissatisfaction and sent out the jurors again.¹⁸

Obviously some Rhode Islanders were not anxious to have counterfeiters brought to justice but in Massachusetts a jury was less obliging in the case of Paul Eunis, who in February, 1730, was tried at the Superior Court in Boston and convicted of forging and passing various Rhode Island bills.¹⁹ Colonel William Coddington and Jahleel Brenton, two of the committee for signing the Rhode Island bills, went to Boston to give testimony against Eunis. By October Eunis had been convicted and had compensated all who had lost by his bogus money.²⁰

In other colonies, as well as in Rhode Island, there were many passers of Rhode Island counterfeits at work. At New London, Connecticut, in December, 1731, John Abbot was jailed for putting off false £5 Rhode Island notes of the latest emission, only to make a daring escape in his wife's clothing the next February.²¹ The *American Weekly Mercury* of June 21, 1733, reported the escape from the jail in Newport of four persons who had counterfeited the £3 bills of the colony.

¹⁸ Richard LeBaron Bowen, *op. cit.*, pp. 85-92 and NCSC Min. Bk. B, pp. 281, 283-285, 323 and Court Files, March 1729; *The Diary of John Comer* (Coll. of the R.I. Historical Society, VIII), pp. 60-61, 65, 80; R.I. Petitions 1, p. 56.

¹⁹ *Boston News-Letter*, Feb. 19, 1730, p. 2.

²⁰ *The Diary of John Comer*, p. 100; Petitions 2, p. 16.

²¹ *Boston News-Letter*, Dec. 9, 1731, p. 2 and Feb. 17, 1732, p. 2. See Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial Connecticut* (N.Y.: American Numismatic Society, 1957), pp. 53-54.

On September 5, 1735, a saddler from Wells in York County, Maine, by the name of Forrest Dolzin was in Providence, where he put off a counterfeit £5 Connecticut bill to Mary Angell, wife of John Angell. On her complaint he was arrested and examined by Justices Richard Waterman and Arthur Fenner. Dolzin testified he got the note, together with some others, from "one William Mortimore, a sort of wandering man," and admitted he suspected the currency was counterfeit and finally confessed he was to have one half of the good money that he could get by passing the dubious bills. When a Mr. Brown was comparing Dolzin's bill with a good one, Dolzin snatched the bill, clapped it into his mouth and chewed it to bits. A diligent search brought to light in the pad of his saddle fifteen £5 and twenty-five 10s. New Hampshire bills. Dolzin confessed that Mortimer had a chest at his (Dolzin's) father's house in Wells.

In spite of all this evidence, when, at the March, 1736, term of the Superior Court in Newport, it was sought to have Dolzin indicted for passing false bills, the grand jury returned the presentment *ignoramus*.²² As a result of Dolzin's arrest a considerable gang of counterfeiters was discovered and broken up.²³

In the next few years counterfeit £5 Rhode Island bills were frequently put off. Thus, in February, 1737, a cordwainer of Watertown, Massachusetts, Silas Church, was jailed in Boston for passing a 20s. bill altered to £5. Church was indicted and convicted, but one Monday night at the beginning of March he broke jail, leaving behind a mocking note to the keeper of the prison, whom he informed that he escaped at about twelve o'clock in a great hurry, so that he could not pay his fees, but would do so the next time he came to jail.²⁴

On the evening of Monday, October 9, 1738, John Webb of Salem bought a saddle in the shop of Isaac Casno on the Town Dock in Boston. In payment Webb offered a £5 Rhode Island bill, which Casno scrupled and several persons present pronounced to be a counterfeit.

²² NCSC Files, March, 1736, term and the *Boston Evening-Post*, Sept. 15, 1735, p. 2.

²³ See Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 80-82.

²⁴ *Boston News-Letter*, Feb. 10, 1737, p. 2, Feb. 17, p. 2, March 2, p. 2.

At this Webb, leaving the bill, mounted his horse and galloped out of town at such a furious pace that he nearly ran over several people in the street. The next day, however, an officer sent in pursuit took him up in Providence and on Wednesday brought him back to Boston, where Webb persuaded the officer to keep him in his house instead of in jail. About five o'clock, however, the prisoner threw up the sash and escaped through the window. The officer, greatly nettled, went to Salem, where he found Webb hiding in his mother's garret and, although the counterfeiter was armed, managed at length to take him.

Through some letters discovered in the house the names of several accomplices were secured, while Webb's wife revealed that the plate had been made by one Harmson, a clockmaker in Marblehead, since deceased. The false bill had in the margin the date 1728 and under it 1731. The plate was well cut, but the signers' names were miserably written and spelled; in some bills William Coddington's name had but one *d*, in others two, and the first name of George Goulding was spelled *Gorge*. Within a short time another of the gang, John Bennet, was captured and jailed in Boston.²⁵ As was too often the case, the crown did not feel that there was sufficient evidence at hand for the conviction of the counterfeiter from Salem, so they were released on bail to appear at the Court of Assize to be held at Ipswich in May, 1739.²⁶

Despite the setback encountered by Webb and Bennet, others were busily putting off the bogus £5 Rhode Island notes. About the end of January, 1739, two men were committed to jail in Springfield, Massachusetts, for passing counterfeit Connecticut currency and £5 Rhode Island bills, while about them were found some £400 of the £5 denomination.²⁷ On April 26 of the same year a pedler named William Hambleton was taken up in Boston for uttering bad £5 Rhode Island bills.²⁸ Somewhat later, on August 17 in Portsmouth, New Hampshire,

²⁵ *Boston Evening-Post*, Oct. 16, 1738, p. 2 and Oct. 23, p. 2.

²⁶ *Id.*, Nov. 20, 1738, p. 2.

²⁷ *Id.*, Feb. 5, 1739, p. 2.

²⁸ *Id.*, April 30, 1739, p. 4.

Paul Giles of Dover, New Hampshire, and Benjamin Gouge of Wells, Maine, were arrested for passing false notes of the same denomination of Rhode Island currency.²⁹ At the September term of the Superior Court in Newport Nathanael Sheldon, of Gloucester, cordwainer, was indicted for having passed one of the bogus £5 notes to Titus Thornton, a husbandman of Gloucester, Providence County, but the petty jury brought in a verdict of not guilty.³⁰

Further arrests produced new information about the counterfeiting of the £5 Rhode Island denomination. The first week in September, 1739, a free negro and a white man (who was using several fictitious names) were jailed in Boston. As they strolled about the country they had been putting off false £5 Rhode Island notes of the emission of 1731, some of the lines of which were uneven. Upon examination the negro stated that a combination of persons at Andover and parts adjacent were concerned in the affair.³¹

The negro and his companion presumably involved others by name, for within a short time several men, some said to be of estate and character, were arrested in Essex County for making or passing the £5 counterfeits. They had also prepared plates to strike still other currency of Rhode Island and also of Connecticut. Vast quantities of the £5 bills had been put into circulation by the gang, and one newspaper commented, "One would be tempted to think that they had argued themselves into a Belief, that it is no Sin or Crime to cheat and defraud their honest Neighbours of their Substance, to raise their own Fortunes."³² One of the confederates, Joseph Parker of Andover, who passed two of the counterfeits to Isaac Martyn of Chebaco, innholder, was taken, tried at Salem in November, and convicted. He pleaded his clergy and had a *T* burned in the brawn of his left thumb.³³ Naturally the government of Rhode Island was anxious to lay hands upon the plate that had been used, so that on November 9

²⁹ *Id.*, Aug. 20, 1739, p. 2 and Sept. 3, p. 2.

³⁰ NCSC, Min. Bk. B, p. 670.

³¹ *Boston News-Letter*, Sept. 13, 1739, p. 2.

³² *Boston Evening-Post*, Oct. 1, 1739, p. 2; *Boston News-Letter*, Sept. 27, 1739, p. 2.

³³ Petitions 4, p. 110.

Governor Wanton offered a reward of £200 for the discovery of the plate or plates and of any person or persons concerned in the counterfeiting, provided they were convicted.³⁴ As was frequently the case a liberal reward produced results, and by the middle of March, 1740, the plate was found in Andover by Cornelius Thayer and removed to Boston by the authorities.³⁵ George Goulding and Jahleel Brenton were appointed by the Rhode Island Assembly in May, 1740, to go to testify against persons to be tried in Ipswich, Massachusetts, and in Portsmouth, New Hampshire, for passing bad Rhode Island bills. Rhode Island authorities discovered the counterfeits through the order of signing, since in no case did it agree with the record book.³⁶

The five pound denomination was not the only one to be used by counterfeiters at this time. On February 24, 1739, Samuel Flood and Joseph Steel approached Mr. Hastier, a goldsmith in New York, and asked him to engrave them plates for striking five shilling New Hampshire bills and ten shilling Rhode Island notes. Hastier, however, notified the authorities; the men were arrested; and a number of counterfeit £5 Rhode Island bills were found in Steel's possession, so it is probable that he was one of the Andover gang. Flood said he came from Andover (where the plate was found) and Steel from Middletown.³⁷ A year later some person or persons had altered twelve-penny Rhode Island bills to ten shillings by adding a 0 to the 1 in the escutcheon at the top of the bill and by tearing out the word *one*.³⁸

It is possible that two men arrested in Rhode Island in 1740 may have belonged to the gang that had put off bad £5 Rhode Island bills. One of them, Hopley Ayres of Newport, a carpenter, was charged with having, on June 11, passed a bogus £5 bill to John Bampffield, also of Newport, a mariner, to be delivered to an innholder of that

³⁴ *Boston Evening-Post*, Nov. 12, 1739, p. 2; *Boston News-Letter* Nov. 15, 1739, p. 2; *R.I. Col. Rec.* IV, p. 562.

³⁵ *Boston Evening-Post*, March 17, 1740, p. 2; *R.I. Petitions* 4, p. 110.

³⁶ *R.I. Col. Rec.* IV, pp. 561, 562, 574; *R.I. Letters* 2, vol. 1, pp. 9-10.

³⁷ *Boston Evening-Post*, March 19, 1739, p. 2; Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial New York*, pp. 42-44.

³⁸ *Boston Evening-Post*, Feb. 4, 1740, p. 2.

town named Timothy Whiting. Ayres pleaded not guilty to his indictment and was acquitted by a jury in October, 1740.³⁹

Captain Hugh Woodbury, a mariner of Beverly, Massachusetts, had, it was charged, on August 4, 1740, passed two false £5 bills to Thomas Brown of Newport, fellmonger. Brown, dubious about the notes, showed them to Josias Lyndon, who pronounced them counterfeit. At this Brown took them back to Woodbury, who gave good bills in their place. Brown had in the meantime written Woodbury's name on the spurious notes. On August 8 Woodbury was examined and professed ignorance as to where he got the money. At this he was bound over in £300 bail, with Henry Bull, Esq., and Jonathan Chase, innkeepers, as his sureties, to appear at the September term of the Superior Court. At that time the grand jury returned his indictment *ignoramus*, and he was discharged.⁴⁰

The American colonies were being threatened not only by domestic counterfeits but also by currency imitated abroad, especially in Ireland, England, and Germany. On April 8 Thomas Mellony, who had come from Ireland, was taken up in Boston for having passed false £5 Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1741. Some of his counterfeits were numbered 137, 139, and 140; and the execution was poor, for the letters were somewhat smaller than on genuine notes and the face of the bills appeared dirty. Mellony was examined several times and jailed.⁴¹

Other poor imitations, this time of the 60s. and 40s. Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1738, were passing in October, 1741. The decorations were well done, but the letters varied greatly; the ink had turned somewhat yellow, and the paper was of poor quality.⁴²

There was much counterfeiting afoot at the time and also some altering of bills. On December 5, 1741, John Burlison of Preston, Connecticut, and his wife Hapsabeth, came to Justice John Cook

³⁹ NCSC, Min. Bk. C, p. 708.

⁴⁰ NCSC Files, Sept., 1740, and NCSC Min. Bk. C, p. 706.

⁴¹ *Boston Evening-Post*, April 13, 1741, p. 1.

⁴² *Boston News-Letter*, Oct. 8, 1741, p. 2.

with two bills, one of tenpence Massachusetts altered to ten shillings by erasing *pence* and changing it to *shillings* and a three shilling Rhode Island bill raised to thirty through changing *three* to *thirty* and putting a cipher after the 3. Hapsabeth informed the justice of the peace that on December 3 she "was a riding" over to one of her neighbors and fell in with two travellers, "youngerly lookt men" of slim build with their hair cut and with white caps on their heads. One man wore a blue cloth greatcoat, the other a dun-colored shag-coat without a cape. They said they had come from the Jerseys and, as the horse of the blue-coated man was nearly ready to give out, they asked her to trade her mount for it and three pounds to boot. Near the house of Deacon Thomas Kinnie in Preston the bargain was struck, and Hapsabeth turned over to the blue-coated man her bay mare with a star in its forehead. She questioned as altered one of the two bills they gave her, but they assured her that it was all right.

A little later, at the dwelling of Roger Billings in Preston, Connecticut, Amos Kinnie saw the same two young men, who said they were from Newark, New Jersey, and were going to Narragansett to buy mares and then return to the Jerseys. The blue-coated man tried to swap Mrs. Burlison's mare with Kinnie. Then, on December 4, Mrs. Burlison showed one of the bills to Jonathan Gibins, who pronounced it counterfeit, whereupon she and her spouse went to Justice Cook about the matter.

Cook ordered the Sheriff of New London County and the constables of its towns to apprehend the strangers, but they had already crossed to Providence County. Justice James Brown of that county, who had ascertained the identity of the two young men, ordered the arrest of Benjamin Wilkinson and Joseph Plummer, both of Scituate. Plummer, who was later to figure as concerned with the Oblong Gang in Dutchess County, New York,⁴³ soon was taken up and indicted at the March, 1742, term of the Superior Court in Newport for having altered a 20 d. Massachusetts bill to 20s. and a 5s. Rhode Island bill to 40s. and passed both. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to

⁴³ See Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial New York* pp. 60-61, 63.

stand half an hour in the pillory and be cropped or pay a fine of £150. He was likewise to pay double damages and, in case of inability to pay, was to be sold for a period up to five years.⁴⁴

Wilkinson was likewise taken into custody and on December 15 was released on bail of £2,000, with Joseph Wilkinson and Reuben Hopkins as his sureties. The formal charge against him was that he had altered a 20d. bill to 20s. The authorities questioned Alice Spink, a spinster of Scituate, who stated that Wilkinson confessed to her that he had altered three or four bills, had passed one to John Randall in Providence, and that Silas Williams, Richard Angell, and Thomas Irons were concerned with him. He came to make this confession when she accused him of such activity, and he exclaimed that Joseph Plummer had told her about it. Alice had seen Mary, Benjamin Wilkinson's wife, burn a quantity of Massachusetts, Rhode Island, and Connecticut counterfeits and had been given some by Mary to burn. Alice Spink, however, took the money to Justice Angell, who bade her keep it and deliver it to the court. One Benjamin Hunt of Providence, who was likewise examined, quoted Mary Wilkinson as saying she burned some of her husband's bills of credit because she had heard a rumor that he was passing altered money and that Alice Spink knew of this and had taken some of the currency. Wilkinson's case was continued from term to term of the Superior Court until, in March, 1744, he was ordered discharged on payment of fees.⁴⁵

The questioning of Alice Spink had indicated that Silas Williams, Richard Angell, and Thomas Irons were involved. On March 29 Ezekiel Warner and Richard Fenner, assistants, issued a warrant for the arrest of Irons⁴⁶, but he apparently was never taken. Silas Williams, however, a yeoman of Providence, was apprehended, indicted for altering currency and passing the raised bills, tried, convicted, and sentenced to stand in the pillory or pay a fine.⁴⁷ Angell, a blacksmith

⁴⁴ NCSC Min. Bk. C, pp. 33-34.

⁴⁵ The material concerning Plummer and Wilkinson is found in NCSC Files, March 1742 and NCSC, Min. Bk. C, pp. 128, 173, 216.

⁴⁶ NCSC Files, March, 1742.

⁴⁷ NCSC, Min. Bk. C, p. 37.



An overmantel panel removed from the house of John Potter in South Kingston and now in the Newport Historical Society. It probably represents John Potter, his second wife (Elizabeth Hazard), his sister Martha, his daughter Mary, and a negro slave.

(Courtesy of the Newport Historical Society)

of Smithfield, too was arrested and was twice presented by the grand jury in March, 1742, in Newport. In the first indictment he was charged with having altered on September 22, 1741, two Rhode Island bills, one of five shillings and one of ten shillings, to forty shillings; in the second presentment he was accused of having altered on July 20, 1741, a tenpenny bill to one of ten shillings. He was tried, found guilty, and sentenced: on the first count, to stand half an hour in the pillory and be cropped or pay a fine of £100 and costs, on the second, to be pilloried and cropped or pay a fine of £50 and costs. He avoided corporal punishment by making the required payments.⁴⁸

The government of Rhode Island in 1742 discovered that two considerable gangs of counterfeiters had been at work and that both had a connection with Obadiah Mors (or Morse). The situation found an echo in the newspapers of the day. The *Boston Evening-Post* of January 25, 1742, reported that some persons were jailed in Newport for counterfeiting Rhode Island bills and that others had been lodged in prison in Boston for the same offence. The same newspaper on February 1 stated that six suspected counterfeiters were in custody in Newport and that in Massachusetts two countrymen had been committed to jail, on one of whom some £32 in false 40s. and £3 bills of the emission of 1738 had been found. The plates and signing were described as poorly done. The *Boston Evening-Post* of March 1 announced that because of the counterfeiting that had been done the bills of the emission of 1740 were called in by order of the General Assembly, while on April 12 the newspaper informed its readers that at the Superior Court in Newport fifteen persons had been indicted for counterfeiting, of whom thirteen had been convicted and two acquitted.

One of the gangs was headed by a person of consequence, a Quaker named John Potter, born on January 3, 1715, in North Kingstown, the son of Colonel John Potter. The counterfeiter, John Potter, in 1736 took as his first wife Mary Perry and upon her death a few years

⁴⁸ NCSC, Min. Bk. C, pp. 34-35, 37-38; General Treasurer's Account Book 1712-1812, p. 309.

later married Elizabeth Hazard, a member of a prominent family. In 1740 Potter began the construction in South Kingstown of an imposing mansion, with Simeon Palmer as his chief carpenter. Potter was one of the grand committee for signing Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1740 and he planned to imitate the 20s. bill. He made use of Palmer for his scheme and also notably of a bricklayer named William Fairfield. Obadiah Mors, a goldsmith, was induced to come from Connecticut, ostensibly to paint the new house but really to cut a plate. Also involved in the scheme were William Potter, a minor, Ichabod Sheffield, a blacksmith, and notably Dr. Stephen Tallman (John Potter's brother-in-law). John Potter even had the effrontery to get his accomplice, William Fairfield, introduced into the press room in Newport, that he might see the real money being printed and observe the technique. Some of the false 20s. bills made by Mors and Fairfield were signed by Potter and Fairfield and put into circulation.

Toward the latter part of January, 1742, the flood of bogus currency had alerted the government, and one after another Fairfield, John Potter, Sheffield and the rest were apprehended. On January 29 Fairfield, in jail, suddenly became loquacious and accused Benjamin Peckham, Jr., of South Kingstown of being an accomplice, a charge, however, which Fairfield withdrew on October 1, when he explained that John and William Potter and Ichabod Sheffield had induced him to bring false accusation against Peckham as the only way to save them all from utter ruin. Because of the high bail set for the two Potters and Sheffield it was decided that four sureties might be accepted instead of the customary two.

Sheffield, as the court records give no information about him, probably escaped prosecution by giving evidence for the King or possibly through breaking jail. Fairfield was convicted and sentenced to stand for half an hour in the pillory and have both ears cropped or pay a fine of £800 and costs. William Potter, probably a young brother of John, was acquitted of passing. John Potter, however, was convicted on five indictments and sentenced to be pilloried and cropped or pay a fine of £10,000 and give a bond of £24,000 for the

exchanging of all his bad bills and paying double damages to persons wronged by them. Potter chose to save his ears, by paying £5,000 in gold dust and the balance in cash.

On May 10, 1742, Potter paid into the treasury 250 ounces of gold dust, which may have in part found its way to England in shipments sent to the colony's agent, Richard Partridge, in London.⁴⁹ In October, 1743, he successfully petitioned the Assembly for the restoration of his rights to vote and act as a freeman.⁵⁰ In time local resentment against him died down, for in 1754 he was elected to serve in the Assembly as a deputy from South Kingstown and the Lower House voted to receive him as a member. The Upper House, however, was less lenient and voted that he should not be received in the Assembly, for his admission, in the light of his counterfeiting, would be "a high Dishonour to the Colony."⁵¹

Mors, who did not have John Potter's money or gold dust and who had been convicted and sentenced to stand in the pillory and be cropped or pay a fine of £1,000, was confined to the Newport jail. On June 26 John Potter, out on bail, paid a visit to the prison, held a whispered conversation with the keeper, James Davis, and was overheard assuring Mors that he need not be afraid. Early in the evening Mrs. Mors came to see her husband and gave him her blue riding hood lined with white silk and made with a new-fashioned hem. Between eight and nine o'clock the prisoner, muffled in the hood, slipped out of the lockup, hugged the prison wall and turned short round a corner, disappearing into a small alley. For two nights he hid out in the garret of Dr. Norbert Wignerion, a physician of Newport, after persuading the doctor's young son Stephen to conceal him. The governor proclaimed a reward of £1000 for the capture of the fugitive, and it was decreed that a fine of £500 should be laid on every person who should conceal the goldsmith or convey

⁴⁹ Colony Agent's Account Book 1715-1748 (ms. in OSS), p. 112; General Treasurer's Account (ms. in OSS) 1712-1812, pp. 309 and 313.

⁵⁰ R.I. Petitions 5, p. 53.

⁵¹ Miscellaneous General Assembly Papers, folder 1750-59 (in OSS).

him out of the colony. Mors finally escaped, but during the summer he was retaken and presumably received his physical punishment. For breaking jail he was fined £50 and costs. Young Stephen Wigneron was lucky enough to be acquitted on a charge of aiding in the goldsmith's jailbreak.⁵²

Deeply involved in John Potter's operations was his brother-in-law, Dr. Stephen Tallman, a physician of Portsmouth. As early as January, 1742, reports reached the authorities that counterfeit 20s. bills had been traced to Tallman, so the doctor was taken into custody and subjected to a lengthy examination by Governor Ward and several assistants. It came to light that Potter and the physician had travelled together to Connecticut, where Tallman had purchased thirteen cattle, some swine, and a Negro slave. In addition, the doctor had lent out to various persons large sums which he admitted he had received from John Potter or from his mother-in-law, Sarah Potter.

It was brought out by questioning Samuel Ox, a mariner whose ship had been wrecked not far from John Potter's, that Dr. Tallman had spent considerable time at Potter's. A deputy sheriff, William Dyre, added information that the physician had declared himself destroyed through a £10,000 debt to Potter. Tallman threatened to ruin Potter "if he went to hell for it" and that he would not go alone and that he would bring out some of his lost friends. At this Dyre told him that "hell was a very bad place by the descriptions of it and that he should consider well what he said." The physician, however, answered, "Damn it; I will."

By April 5 Deputy Governor William Greene issued a warrant for the arrest of Tallman, but the doctor claimed he was too ill to go from home. The next day Greene, who was mistrustful, sent two physicians, Dr. Clarke Rodman and Dr. James Robinson, to examine their colleague. They promptly reported that they found Tallman "in a

⁵² For a much more extensive account of the activities of John Potter and his associates, see Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 106-120 and NCSC Files, March 1742 and NCSC, Min. Bk. C, pp. 80, 81, 126, 128; see also R.I. Journals of the Senate 1740-1788 II, pp. 1-2; R.I. Reports to the General Assembly 1728-1750, I, p. 61; R.I. Colony Records 5, p. 493.

sweat" but that he was quite able to attend the court the next day if the weather was good.

Although Dr. Tallman had been indicted, his case apparently did not come to trial. He spent some time in jail for debt and a suit he lost in an attempt to escape payment of a £10,000 bond to John Potter. In April, 1743, the doctor was being sued for £1400 by Daniel Howland and the physician's affairs were in a hopeless state. So on the night of April 23 Tallman sold his livestock to his brother Silas, gave his wife Mary a power of attorney and fled under cover of darkness. He was never seen or heard of again as far as the authorities could discover.⁵³

Another gang that had been formed made use of bills struck from the plate that Mors engraved. This gang consisted originally, it appears, of Samuel Thompson, Benjamin Vorce (or Force), Samuel Hunt, and Daniel Darling, all of Mendon. Henry Bosworth, who was induced to come from New York to join them, went to Boston to discuss the making of a plate with Obadiah Mors. At the time nothing was decided, but some eleven months later Bosworth and Vorce visited Mors, who was then in New London. Then in June, 1741, Vorce approached Lieutenant Israel Phillips of Smithfield and told him that Mors had promised Bosworth to cut a plate for striking 20s. Rhode Island bills on condition that £100 be raised to pay him. Vorce added that Samuel Thompson, a miller, was concerned in the scheme and proposed that he and Phillips try to win over Captain Israel Arnold of Gloucester as a partner. Arnold agreed and, together with Phillips, raised the £100, which was entrusted to Vorce. Soon Seth Arnold, a farmer of Smithfield, joined the group, as did Samuel Staples of the same town, whom Mors later described as "a comical fellow."

Before long Staples recruited Daniel Comstock, Jr., of Smithfield and then Daniel's brother Azariah. Then Jacob Boyce of Bellingham,

⁵³ The documents relating to the case of Dr. Stephen Tallman, 1742-1743, are contained in a special folder in OSS. See also R.I. Equity Court File Papers, 5, pp. 21-24.

Massachusetts, hearing of the business, approached Staples, who sent Jacob to his (Jacob's) cousin Joseph Boyce of Salem to obtain a supply of bogus currency. Joseph Boyce obliged by providing one 40s. and two £3 Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1738, all signed, and in addition £50 in unsigned notes, with the understanding that Jacob would have Staples sign them. Staples did a poor job of signing, for which Jacob gave him a good ten shilling Boston bill, and then Jacob delivered the £50 of counterfeits to Moses Bartlett of Bellingham, who in turn gave £5 of the money to Stephen Ellis of Mendon.

To obtain further counterfeits Ellis, Staples, and Jacob Boyce set out from Mendon one Sunday night in January, 1742, for Salem, where they passed two nights at the home of Joseph Boyce and secured from him £800 in bad money. Joseph accompanied the others as far as Bowden's Tavern in Lynn, where Joseph sent his cousin back to Salem to get £150 more from a small box in the garret beneath a pile of deerskins. Staples gave Jacob Boyce £5 of this money, but when Jacob tried to pass it in Medfield he was arrested and jailed.

The gang obtained counterfeits not only from Joseph Boyce but also from Mors, who for some time resided at John Potter's. Mors did not turn over a plate, but furnished false 20s. bills, some signed and others unsigned. When Potter and his associates were taken up, the attention of the authorities was also turned to the other group.

Bosworth, described as "late of Mendon," was arrested in May probably through the efforts of Daniel Barks, William Arnold, and David Comstock, and early in June was in jail in Newport awaiting trial. Captain Job Bennett had orders to make the south chamber in the prison as secure as possible, but despite unusual precautions, Bosworth fled.⁵⁴ John Hunt, employed by Thomas Beadle to track down the runaway, pursued Bosworth through Connecticut to the Oblong in New York, where he seized him and brought him back to Providence, having spent twenty days in the operation. Beadle and Hunt were voted a reward of £84 and Hunt a payment of some £25

⁵⁴ R.I. Records of Governor and Council 1667-1753, p. 162.

for his services. Beadle suspected that Bosworth knew which of two Daniel Darlings, father or son, was involved in the counterfeiting.⁵⁵

When William Arnold of Smithfield, a justice of the peace, reported that a reward of £50 a head was offered for the capture of counterfeiters, William Howard, Uriah Thayer, Gideon Comstock, Nathan Staples, and Benjamin and Seth Cook went after Samuel Thompson and Benjamin Force, whom they turned over to the authorities.⁵⁶ The two Comstocks, Israel Phillips, Moses Bartlett, Seth and Israel Arnold were likewise apprehended. Staples refused to answer questions about what he considered his private business, but others talked freely, and all except Staples were tried, convicted, and sentenced to stand in the pillory and be cropped or otherwise pay stiff fines. Seth Arnold, Israel Phillips, and the two Comstocks each paid a fine of £300. Moses Bartlett and Joseph Plummer, likewise involved in the counterfeiting, each paid £150. In February, 1743, Seth Arnold and Daniel Comstock, Jr., petitioned the Assembly and had their rights as freemen restored.⁵⁷ Other counterfeiters taken up at this time were John Mowrey, Jonathan Richardson, Jr., of Providence, Edward Aldrich of Uxbridge, and Jonathan Thayer, Jr.⁵⁸

Richardson and Aldrich had passed some false Rhode Island £3 and 40s. bills to the wife of Samuel Pitkin in Hartford, Connecticut, so they were arrested there and their trial was set for September. They discovered to the authorities a number of persons in Salem as the principal actors in the affair.⁵⁹

The government of Massachusetts moved swiftly. Officers were sent off to Salem and Lynn, and John Barker and Nathaniel Haysey

⁵⁵ Petitions 4, pp. 131, 163.

⁵⁶ Petitions 5, p. 28.

⁵⁷ Petitions 5, p. 42.

⁵⁸ NCSC Files, March and September, 1742 and NCSC, Min. Bk. C, pp. 31-33, 35; General Treasurer's Account Book (OSS) 1712-1812, p. 309. Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 120-124; Accounts Allowed by the General Assembly (OSS) Folder 1742.

⁵⁹ R.I. Letters 1, vol. 2, p. 17; *Boston News-Letter*, July 29, 1742, p. 2, and August 5, 1742, p. 2.

seized Joseph Boyce and Eleazer Lindsey, both of Salem, the principal offenders, on the charge of passing false £3 and 40s. Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1738. The plates and many counterfeit notes were discovered there, and the two counterfeiters were committed to jail. From a barn in Lynn there were taken from Lindsey a large quantity of paper already cut for their purpose, ink, and a number of pens ready for signing. Francis Bowden and Jonathan Hawkes were also jailed, and warrants were issued for some ten persons employed as passers. It appeared, besides, that the gang had emissaries in all the neighboring governments and had probably put off several thousand pounds of counterfeits.⁶⁰

On July 21, 1742, a man belonging to York was committed to jail in Boston on suspicion of being concerned in imitating the forty shilling Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1738, two of which were found on him. The writing was poorly done, and the signer's name, Brenton, was spelled Bunton on the counterfeit.⁶¹

Another counterfeiter, one Robert Neal, a mariner, came over from London in a vessel commanded by Captain Fones. Neal, who lived in Salem, aroused suspicion in Boston and was taken before a magistrate. Finally he acknowledged that the bills were made and signed in London and that a large number were hidden in a box in a rocky place in Salem. A search revealed the box, which contained plates and thousands of pounds of counterfeit currency of Rhode Island and Connecticut.⁶²

A woman, another passer of American-made £5 counterfeits of the Rhode Island emission of 1737, was detected in Boston in December and committed to jail. A search ordered by the examining magistrate brought to light sixty-five of the false bills artfully concealed about her person.⁶³

As a result of the discovery of so much counterfeiting in 1742 an act was passed the next year providing that counterfeiters of bills should

⁶⁰ Letters 1, vol. 2, pp. 13, 18; *Boston News-Letter* July 29, 1742, p. 2.

⁶¹ *Boston News-Letter*, July 22, 1742, p. 1.

⁶² *Id.*, Aug. 26, 1742, p. 1; Letters 1, vol. 2, p. 14.

⁶³ *Boston News-Letter*, Dec. 23, 1742, p. 1.

be prevented "from proxing or voting" in the colony or being chosen to any office. Offenders were to be pilloried, cropped, branded with *R* on both cheeks, imprisoned, and compelled to pay double damages, costs of prosecution, and double interest during the time of possessing false currency; moreover, all deeds or other instruments of lands or personal estates made by persons convicted of counterfeiting were to be void and the whole estate was to be forfeited.⁶⁴

On June 3, 1743, John Burdick of Westerly, a laborer, gave Mary Sheffield, wife of Captain Jeremiah Sheffield of South Kingstown, an 18d. bill altered to 10s. because her husband had taken up a mare for Burdick. Mary claimed the bill was bad, but Burdick told her that if it would not pass for ten shillings, it would for six and then hastened away. Mary on June 15 complained of this to Justice Isaac Sheldon in South Kingstown, who issued a warrant for the arrest of Burdick. He was taken into custody and examined two days later by Sheldon. The prisoner claimed he had received the note as change from a 40s. bill with which he had paid Hope Covey of Charleston for a sheepskin. Covey, a tanner, and his partner, Stephen Rose, were questioned on June 22. They admitted that Burdick about two months before had purchased the skin from them with a 40s. note, but both felt certain they had not given him the altered bill in change. On June 29 Burdick was released on bail of £1,000, with Hubert Burdick and Hubert Burdick, Jr., both of Westerly, King's County, as sureties.

At the Superior Court held in Newport in September, 1743, Burdick was indicted for having altered a 1s. 6d. bill to 2s. 6d. He failed to appear, and his bail was declared forfeited. His sureties tried to escape payment of the bond by appealing to the General Assembly, but the legislators granted them no relief, and full execution was ordered upon the judgment in 1744.⁶⁵

A further discovery of counterfeit Rhode Island bills was made in

⁶⁴ *R.I. Col. Rec.*, V, p. 73; *Charter, Acts and Laws of His Majesty's Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations 1663-1745* (Newport; The Widow Franklin, 1744/45), pp. 258-260.

⁶⁵ NCSC Files, Sept., 1743, and Min. Bk. C, pp. 173, 216, 268-269; Petitions 5, p. 49.

January, when some false ten shilling notes dated "Kingstown, February 2, 1741," were found to be passing in Boston.⁶⁶ One of the passers was very likely a certain Rice of Marlborough, Massachusetts, who in mid-August was apprehended and jailed in Boston. On his person were found counterfeit half-crown, ten-shilling, and twenty-shilling bills of Rhode Island to the value of about thirty pounds. It was reported that Rice was a member of a gang of old offenders in Essex County,⁶⁷ by which were presumably meant Joseph Boyce and others. It is probable that the authorities wormed information out of Rice and took speedy action in Salem, where Joseph Boyce and John Scias were in prison by the next month if not before on suspicion of counterfeiting. On the night of September 7 these two "good looking strong able bodied men" broke out of jail, and Sheriff John Wolcott offered £10 for their recapture, describing Boyce as wearing his own hair, short and black, and Scias as having a wig or cap. About two years before both had been convicted of counterfeiting, burnt in the hand and marked with the letter *T*. They were retaken, and their trial was scheduled for June 19, 1746.⁶⁸

Rice and two others were indicted in August, Rice for passing, one for partly engraving a plate to counterfeit Rhode Island money, and one for concealing the plate. These two were tried, but not Rice, because a material witness was in Connecticut.⁶⁹ His case was tried in Boston in February, 1746, when the jury brought in a special verdict.⁷⁰

Sometime in the summer of 1745 Alice Robinson, the wife of Joseph Robinson of Killingly in Windham County, Connecticut, otherwise called Alice Nossibar, was arrested on a charge of having passed on July 23 to Joshua Dean, a goldsmith of Providence, a counterfeit twenty-shilling bill of Rhode Island. She was admitted to bail, and her bond was furnished by her husband, by Stephen Russell

⁶⁶ *Boston Evening-Post*, Jan. 9, 1744, p. 4.

⁶⁷ *Id.*, Aug. 13, 1744, p. 4.

⁶⁸ *Id.*, Sept. 10, 1744, p. 2; Letters I, vol. 2, pp. 74, 137, vol. 3, p. 59.

⁶⁹ Letters (OSS) I, vol. 2, p. 53.

⁷⁰ Letters, I, vol. 2, p. 137.

of Gloucester, yeoman, and David Waters of Providence, husbandman. At the September term of the Superior Court in Newport she did not at first appear when summoned. With her bondsman, David Waters, she arrived fifteen minutes too late, since a calm forced them to row across at the ferries. She was, however, tried later, and the petty jury returned a verdict of not guilty, whereupon she was discharged on payment of fees.⁷¹ In view of the fact that her husband and his brother appear to have tried their hands at counterfeiting in Connecticut, it may be surmised that the lady was either guilty or was unwittingly uttering a bill made by Joseph Robinson or his brother William.⁷²

At about this time there came up for discussion in the Rhode Island Assembly some letters from Governor Jonathan Law about counterfeit plates and money makers, whereupon the legislators decided not to vote rewards to discoverers in other colonies,⁷³ a lack of cooperation between provinces which did much to encourage malefactors. Young Joseph Boyce and a certain Hurlbutt were taken in the Oblong in New York, and with them were seized two plates for making counterfeits of the Rhode Island 20s. bills and one for the 10s. denomination. Boyce and Hurlbutt escaped from the New Haven jail, where they were committed, and the man who had betrayed them was forced to move with his family to escape the fury of the villains, who threatened his life and actually destroyed his crops in the fields.⁷⁴

For a few years there was an apparent inactivity among counterfeiters in Rhode Island, but it became clear at the March, 1749, term of the Superior Court of Providence County that money makers had been at work after all. On July 5, 1748, Daniel Walling, in jail in Worcester, Massachusetts, for having passed a false 30s. Massachusetts bill, made a deposition in which he stated that Samuel Cook had told him of having secured in Jamaica some three or four years before

⁷¹ NCSC Min. Bk. E, p. 365; Petitions 6, p. 53.

⁷² Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial Connecticut* (New York: American Numismatic Society, 1957), pp. 75-77.

⁷³ *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, pp. 130-131.

⁷⁴ Letters I, vol. 2, pp. 74, 160, 1631.

plates for making bills. Walling added that he had seen false bills in the possession of James Blackmore of Gloucester and about £30 or £40 more of such notes in the hands of Daniel Phillips of Smithfield.

Phillips was promptly taken into custody, and in the course of his examination on July 7 before Justice David Comstock he admitted that he had obtained counterfeit 30s. bills from Walling, of which he passed one to Drown, a shopkeeper in Providence, another to Thomas Shippe, Jr., of Smithfield, and a third to a man who brought wheels to sell at Job Arnold's; the rest of the money he had returned to Walling. He did not, however, admit that he had put off one of the false notes, on August 15, 1747, to the wife of Daniel Fones of North Kingstown, gentleman. Phillips and others were in custody and were to be tried at the September sessions of the Superior Court, but it was postponed to December, and then only two judges came. As a result persons in jail on the charge of counterfeiting had to be discharged on bail, and it seemed doubtful that they would appear again. Phillips, however, was indicted for this offense at the March, 1749, term of the Superior Court, was tried, found guilty, and sentenced in accordance with law.

At the same time Samuel Cook of Springfield, husbandman, was presented by the grand jury for having, on July 5, 1745, procured four plates for making the £3 Connecticut, the 40s. Massachusetts, the 10s. New Hampshire and the 40s. Rhode Island bills, and for having struck money from the same, and likewise for having made and signed two false 30s. Massachusetts notes. He was tried, but the petty jury brought him in not guilty on all indictments.⁷⁵

Early in February, 1750, the Massachusetts authorities were alarmed by a report that after the death of Colonel Stephen Paine of Bristol, great quantities of Massachusetts and Rhode Island counterfeits were found in his money chest. Governor William Greene of Rhode Island at once had an investigation made by Joseph Russell, who reported that among £4,500 of paper money in the chest only one 10s.

⁷⁵ The material relating to Cook, Phillips and Walling is found in PCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 57-58, and PCSC Files, 1749; Petitions 6, p. 154.

note was false, so the innocence of the late Colonel Paine was quickly established.⁷⁶

The General Assembly, rightly apprehensive concerning the widespread counterfeiting of the colony's money, when a new emission was authorized in March, 1751, provided the penalty of death for all offenders.⁷⁷ Early in November it was found that false bills were being passed, but not those of Rhode Island, by Willet Larabe. This individual had come to the notice of the authorities as a correspondent and probably accomplice of known counterfeiters in 1749. In that year Isaac Jones and Joseph (or John) Bill were being hotly pursued by the Massachusetts authorities. On March 31, posing, Bill as "Doctor Wilson" and Jones as "Captain Wright," guided by an Indian squaw they arrived at an early hour in the morning at the house of Jedediah Ashcraft in Groton, Connecticut, and desired immediate transportation to Sag Harbor on Long Island. Ashcraft complied, and on May 5 a warrant was issued for his arrest. The prisoner was subjected to searching examination by Justice Daniel Coit, especially with reference to a letter addressed to Willet Larabe of Norwich and found in Ashcraft's possession by Deputy Sheriff Daniel Collins of New London County.⁷⁸

At the time no action seems to have been taken, but in October, 1751, Lucy Leffingwell of Norwich, Connecticut, was detected passing a counterfeit 20s. bill of New Hampshire to Colonel Joseph Pendleton of Westerly. Lucy was examined at South Kingstown on October 29 by Justices Jonathan Randall and William Richmond. Her story involved Larabe and ran as follows: some two or three weeks before she had made an agreement with Larabe and her brother-in-law John Bill (doubtless the same as Joseph Bill, for he called himself sometimes John and at other times Joseph) to pass counterfeit bills for them. She was to give Larabe one half of the good money she got by putting off his bad currency, while Bill was to give her twenty

⁷⁶ Letters I, vol. 3, pp. 126, 146, 149, 164 and Letters II, vol. 1, p. 85.

⁷⁷ *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, p. 319; *Boston Evening-Post*, April 8, 1751, p. 2.

⁷⁸ Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 176-177.

shillings a day for uttering his bogus notes. They told her that if she found any counterfeits she was to dispose of them as agreed.

Soon after, while making the bed, she found between the upper and lower bed at one time fifteen counterfeits and at another eleven. On October 28 she set out to pass the money and to meet Larabe near Tower Hill in South Kingstown. Before she was caught, she had put off a bill to Dr. Hutchins of Bolton, Connecticut, another to Asa Fitch, who tended Ensign Williams's shop in Norwich, a third to Dr. Spire, who lived near the line between Preston and Groton, two to Mrs. Williams, the wife of a tavernkeeper in Groton, another to an unknown person in that town, one to the wife of Amos Cheeseborough in Stonington, and one to Captain John Dennison also of Stonington.

In addition to the bogus currency she had found in the bed Lucy, about the beginning of July, received four counterfeits from Larabe, all of which she passed, giving the good notes to him. About October 23 Bill gave her five bad bills, which she put off, giving him the proceeds except for twenty shillings which she kept as had been agreed.

Willet Larabe went to Tower Hill to keep his rendezvous with Lucy, found her there in jail, and had a talk with her. He was promptly arrested and closely questioned. He admitted seeing Lucy in jail and often on other occasions. He himself had been busily passing counterfeit twenty shilling New Hampshire bills, one, as he admitted, at Stedman's tavern in South Kingstown, one at a tavern kept by Joseph Hull, and one to a Mr. Stanton. He explained that he had made this journey to purchase a stallion for Mr. Ellison of Stonington and that he desired to go to Newport to learn what price beef and pork would fetch there. He said he had about £60 or £70 in his pocket and six bills which the authorities took out of the lining of his saddlebags. He said that he received them in Fishkill, New York, for a horse that he sold there. As for their being hidden, he explained that, "learning that there were robbers in the highlands," he concealed the bills so that they would not be found in case he was attacked. He admitted passing such bills to one Fowler who kept a tavern under the hill near

the great bridge and one at Joseph Hull's, where he breakfasted the day he was arrested.⁷⁹

Larabe was indicted for having passed five false bills, one each to John Gardner, George Thomas, Christopher Fowler, Charles Hall and Joseph Hull. As Lucy Leffingwell was not prosecuted, it is extremely likely that she was accepted as King's Evidence against Larabe. At the Superior Court of King's County early in November he was convicted of putting off 20s. bills of New Hampshire, for which crime he was sentenced to stand on November 7 for a half hour in the pillory, to be branded on both cheeks with *R*, to be imprisoned for one month, to pay all costs and double damages, and to forfeit the remainder of his estate to the use of the colony.⁸⁰

There was, however, a truly serious threat to the currency of Rhode Island, for Owen Sullivan, one of the most desperate and mischievous counterfeiters of the day, had transferred his operations from Massachusetts to Rhode Island, since his activity had involved him in difficulties in Boston. Much has been published about his career from the time of his childhood in Ireland to his death on the gallows in New York City in 1756.⁸¹ The court records of Rhode Island provide still further data about him and his associates. The *Boston Evening-Post* of August 17, 1752, informed its readers that a company of villains had lately been discovered in Providence, who were engaged in passing false £16 Rhode Island bills of the latest emission.

Sullivan and some of his accomplices were tried at the September, 1752, term of the Superior Court of Providence County. He had been using the alias of John Pierson and was described as an engraver by

⁷⁹ KCSC Files, October term, 1751.

⁸⁰ *Boston Evening-Post*, Nov. 11, 1751, p. 4; KCSC Min. Bk., p. 85; *R.I. Col. Rec.* 6, p. 268.

⁸¹ See Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 205-208; *Counterfeiting in Colonial New York*, pp. 87-92; "Counterfeiting in Colonial New Hampshire," *Historical New Hampshire* XIII (1957), pp. 18-27; "The Dover Money Club," *New York Folklore* XII (1956), pp. 14-20. Eliphalet Beecher, who captured Sullivan, wrote on June 1, 1756, to Governor Hopkins of Rhode Island, enclosing his account of £134 for pursuing counterfeiters and informing him that three members of the money club were still engaged in the same practices (Letters I, vol. 4, p. 108).

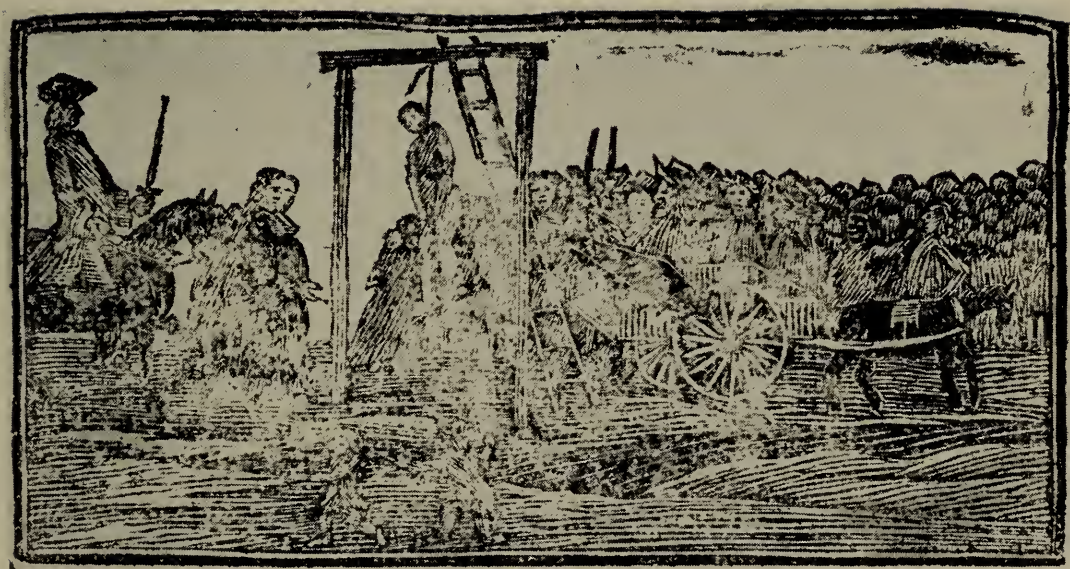
profession. Ezra Richmond of Dighton, Massachusetts, Samuel Brown of Norwalk, Connecticut, and John Slocum of Newport aided in the capture of Sullivan and helped Samuel White to arrest one Stephens and others of the gang.⁸² The charge against Sullivan was that on June 12 he made a copper plate for counterfeiting the £16 bills of Rhode Island and that on August 5 he struck off currency from it. Since one of his accomplices had confessed, Sullivan yielded to the inevitable, pleaded guilty and was sentenced to pillorying, cropping, branding, a month's imprisonment, payment of costs and forfeiture of his estate. In case this should not suffice to meet the costs, he might be sold for any period up to seven years.⁸³ That he got off lightly in the infliction of the corporal punishment and finally escaped to Dutchess County, New York, was due to his daring and ingenuity as well as to the laxity of the officers.

The accomplice, who by confessing brought about Sullivan's conviction, was a laborer of Dighton in Bristol County named Nicholas Stephens, Jr. He pleaded guilty to helping the master counterfeiter and was sentenced according to law.⁸⁴ Three other men named Stephens were involved. Joseph Stephens, a miller of Dighton, who was likewise an accomplice of Sullivan, was indicted as a passer of bad currency, but he escaped through a legal technicality. Through some inadvertence on the part of the government his indictment failed to mention the town or place where the fact was alleged to have been committed. The defendant pleaded that the presentment was therefore insufficient; the court agreed and the prisoner was dismissed on payment of costs. Zephaniah Stephens of Dighton uttered a bad £16 bill to Jonathan Otis, a goldsmith of Newport. He was apprehended, released on bail and fled to Connecticut, where he was taken up and admitted his guilt. Among those concerned with him were Peter Smith of Norwalk and David Sandford and Timothy

⁸² Petitions, 13, p. 44; Accounts Allowed 1755.

⁸³ PCSC, Min. Bk. I, p. 9; PCSC Files 1750-1753; and *Boston Evening-Post*, Oct. 9, 1752; R.I. Colony Records, 6, p. 288.

⁸⁴ PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 97 and PCSC Files, 1750-1753.



The hanging of Owen Sullivan in New York in 1756, from a woodcut which served as a frontispiece to his autobiography printed that same year.

(Courtesy of the American Antiquarian Society)

Delevan, both from New York. Elkanah Stephens was captured by Philip Wheeler and Daniel Hunt, who were given £20 as a reward. Elkanah and John Blowers were jailed in Providence but apparently were not prosecuted.⁸⁵

On August 12, 1752, Jacob Wiley, a trader of Woodstock, Windham County, Connecticut, was arrested and examined in Providence. His story clearly implicated Elias Smith of Glocester, yeoman. Wiley told how in April he received from Nathaniel White, a vagrant whom he met at Dover, New York, about £370 in false £4 bills of New Hampshire and about £1,000 in £2 bills. Of these notes he delivered at Woodstock £77 of each sort to Elias Smith, who asked him to procure further counterfeits for him. Accordingly in July he gave Smith £90 more; while at Smith's home in Glocester, he saw a plate for striking 10 s. New Hampshire bills.⁸⁶

Elias Smith, yeoman of Glocester, was, of course, taken into custody and in September, 1752, three indictments were found against him: for passing on July 30, 1752, a false £5 Rhode Island bill to John Sayles, Jr., of Smithfield; for uttering on the same day to the same person three counterfeit £4 notes of New Hampshire; for putting off on the same day two more such spurious New Hampshire bills to an innholder of Providence, John Olney. Smith was tried on all three counts and acquitted.⁸⁷

It may be noted that a few years later, at the September, 1755, term of the Superior Court of Providence County, Smith was presented by the grand jury for having on September 20, 1754, at Smithfield, passed to Ephraim Whipple of Providence, yeoman, three counterfeit £16 Rhode Island bills of the emission of 1750. To this he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to stand an hour in the pillory between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m., to be cropped, branded, jailed for sixty days, to pay costs and double damages and forfeit his estate.⁸⁸ At the same term of the

⁸⁵ PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 96; Petitions 8, p. 195; Petitions 9, p. 16; Accounts Allowed 1755; Miscellaneous Counterfeiting 1745-1777 (ms. in OSS), Feb. 27, 1754.

⁸⁶ PCSC Files 1750-1753.

⁸⁷ PCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 96-97; PCSC Files 1750-1753.

⁸⁸ PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 159 and PCSC Files, 1750-1753.

Court he was likewise indicted for helping John King of Mendon make a press for counterfeiting bills and for having received false money. Since, however, Smith was duly convicted on the other indictment, prosecution on this one was dropped.⁸⁹

Another member of Sullivan's gang, John Rosier, a boatman of Dighton, was taken into custody and indicted in September, 1752, for advising with Sullivan about making a plate and for helping him strike £16 bills. Unfortunately for justice, the indictment was found insufficient in law because no town or place where the crime was committed had been mentioned. The Court, as in the case of Joseph Stephens, therefore ordered the prisoner dismissed.⁹⁰

On January 12, 1753, Frederick Sturmev, along with others, broke out of the jail in Boston. Before long, however, he was arrested and committed in Providence on the charge of passing false £8 New Hampshire bills. The Sheriff's officers of Suffolk County, Massachusetts, hearing of this, applied to the authorities in Providence for the fugitive, who was obligingly surrendered to them and again imprisoned in Boston.⁹¹

A new threat to Rhode Island money was the appearance in August of false £16 bills. Dr. Shadrach Seagers, a physician of Wallingford, Connecticut, in August, 1753, discovered some of these counterfeits. Aided by Job Clarke and John Hall, he set out to arrest the criminals responsible and, as a result of his efforts, fourteen counterfeiterers were seized; several were convicted and the whole company was broken up. The Rhode Island Assembly voted Dr. Seagers a reward of £70.⁹²

Some of this gang, who were passing bills made by Owen Sullivan, were Abijah Averell, his brother Solomon Averell, and John Cogswell. Abijah, who came originally from Preston, Connecticut, had resided some years in Newport, where he was taken up for passing bogus £16

⁸⁹ PCSC Files, 1755-1757.

⁹⁰ PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 97 and Rosier's indictment in PCSC Files 1750-1753.

⁹¹ *Boston Evening-Post*, Feb. 5, 1753, p. 4.

⁹² Petitions 9, p. 54.

bills. He was committed to jail and confessed that the bills were made by Sullivan and that he had got them from his brother Samuel of Preston and from John Cogswell of Woodstock, Connecticut. Governor Greene of Rhode Island then requested that the two men in Connecticut be arrested and extradited.⁹³

Cogswell was taken, but by October, 1753, he had, like Owen Sullivan, escaped from jail and the government offered a reward of £400 for the capture of either one.⁹⁴ He was recaptured and the court sentenced him to stand an hour in the pillory on May 9, to have his ears cropped, to be branded with *R* on both cheeks, to pay double damages and all costs and to forfeit his entire estate. Some of his well-to-do kinsmen, taking pity on him in his "melancholy and distressing circumstances," offered to advance £900 to make good damages done by his counterfeits, and to pay all costs and expenses of the colony in connection with his case. The Assembly, tempted by the offer, voted him a full pardon if all costs were paid and the sum of £1600 was lodged in the treasury to cover damages. On May 7 at noon John Topham of Newport and John Crandal of South Kingstown gave bond in the amount of £2100 for Cogswell. When the bond was not paid by February, 1755, the General Treasurer put it in suit.⁹⁵

Since his flight from Rhode Island in 1752, Owen Sullivan had been extremely active in Dutchess County, New York, in Connecticut and New Hampshire, where he was the guiding spirit of numerous counterfeiting bands. In 1755 some of his accomplices in Rhode Island were taken in the toils of the law. Sometime in the summer of that year Joseph Scott, Sheriff of Newport County, went to Tiverton, searched the house of Peleg Barker for false bills and brought Barker to Newport. The Sheriff also went twice to Mendon to arrest counterfeiters of Rhode Island currency and found some plates.⁹⁶

⁹³ Letters I, vol. 4, pp. 23, 26; Letters II, vol. 1, p. 94.

⁹⁴ R.I. Colony Records 6, p. 345; *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, pp. 376-377.

⁹⁵ *Boston Evening Post*, March 25, 1754; Petitions 8, p. 163, 187; R.I. Reports to the General Assembly, vol. 6, pp. 105, 370-371, 405, 466; Reports, vol. 2, p. 45; vol. 7, p. 4.

⁹⁶ *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, pp. 454-455; Accounts Allowed 1755.

Joseph Munroe of Swansea, Bristol County, Massachusetts, yeoman, was taken up by Captain Job Bennett, Jr., as one of Sullivan's accomplices. At his first examination on August 28, 1755, when asked if he knew Owen Sullivan, he cautiously replied that he had "heard tell of such a man." He admitted receiving from a stranger from the westward who went by the name of Smith £105 for a horse, bridle and saddle. Of this sum he passed one £16 bill to Mr. Barnard in Bristol, another to Mr. Lyndall in Bristol, two to Squire Miller, one to Bernard Miller, one to Richard Hale, one to Captain Mumford, two to a Mr. Tillinghast, one to Peter Hunt of Rehoboth. Besides he put off four such bills to Mr. Russell over the bridge, an £8 bill to S. Lyndall and another to Richard Hale.

The next day Munroe was questioned again before Justice Martin Howard. This time he was more communicative, admitting that about six weeks before in the woods near his house he had received fifty-five £16 counterfeit bills from a man who called himself Smith but was beyond dispute Sullivan. Of these he passed two to Benjamin Miller, one to John Cole, one to Barnet Miller and two to Richard Hale, all in Warren, while in Providence he had put off four counterfeits, one to a shopkeeper named Tillinghast, one to Captain Mumford, and one to Rupels, "bookkeeper near the bridge." Some of the bad currency, placed in a sugar box, he hid in a hedge fence in the woods near his home. Further he volunteered the information that Sullivan, Constant Barney, Joshua Read and Ichabod Ide concealed in the same hedge another sugar box, sealed with pitch, wherein were about a hundred of the false £16 bills, all of which, according to Sullivan, were unnumbered.

At the August, 1755, term of the Superior Court in Newport Munroe was presented on three counts: one of the presentments, in which he was charged with passing on August 3 a false £16 bill of the emission of March 6, 1755, to William Mumford of Newport, the grand jury returned *ignoramus*; he was further indicted for putting off another such bill to Benjamin Miller on August 4; and also for passing still another such note on August 5 to the same person. To these he pleaded guilty and

was thereupon sentenced in accordance with law.⁹⁷ His estate yielded £637/7/0 to the Public Treasury.⁹⁸

Read, Ide, and Barney, whom Munroe implicated at his examination, were arrested, Joshua Read [or Reed], a wheelwright of Swansea, by Captain Job Bennett, Jr. Read, who was examined by Martin Howard in Newport on August 29, admitted receiving sixty-two or sixty-three £16 counterfeits from Sullivan at Joseph Munroe's house. Of these he admitted he put off two to his father, Joseph Read of Cumberland, one to Benjamin Thurber, one to Mr. Tillinghast, a shopkeeper, one to Captain Cole, all of Providence. In addition he passed one to John Barney of Rehoboth; two he gave to Joseph Munroe; one he paid out to John Mason of Swansea, one to Nathan Miller of Warren, two to the Widow Payne, and two to a man for a barrel of Malaga. The man who sold Read the wine returned the bills as bad, and Read burned them. The remainder of his counterfeits, he confessed, were hidden some forty rods west of his house in a bundle placed in an earthen pot, covered with a brass pan. The press with which the bills were struck was lying in the fence some distance to the south of the earthen pot.

Read was presented for having passed the two counterfeits to his father, one to Thurber and one to Nathan Miller. To all indictments he pleaded guilty and was sentenced in accordance with law.⁹⁹ Sheriff Joseph Scott put up the pillory, cropped Read, and then took down the pillory again, for which he was duly paid by act of the General Assembly.¹⁰⁰

Ichabod Ide of Rehoboth, laborer, was examined by Justice Martin Howard on August 27 and freely confessed his guilt. He said he had had in his possession about £500 or more of the counterfeit bills, some received at Rehoboth about six months before from Sullivan, who was then using the alias of Isaac Washington, and others from

⁹⁷ NCSC Min. Bk. E, p. 31 and NCSC Files 1755.

⁹⁸ R.I. Colony Records 8, pp. 272, 295, 296; vol. 2, pp. 82, 141; Petitions 10, p. 26.

⁹⁹ NCSC Min. Bk. E, p. 30 and NCSC Files, 1755.

¹⁰⁰ *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, pp. 454-455; Accounts Allowed 1755.

the same man at Dover, New York, about three weeks later. He passed three notes to Edward Bosworth of Warren, two to John Lovet, a butcher of Providence, five to his brother, John Ide, for a sorrel mare, one to James Clay, one to Samuel Newman, one to Simeon Bowen, all of Rehoboth, one to Thomas Lundley and one to a certain Lapham of Cumberland, three to a man at Canterbury, Connecticut, for old tenor bills, one to a tavernkeeper in Canterbury for a piece of gold, and three to Elisha Luther as part payment of a note Luther had against him.

Ide continued his statement in these words: "Last Thursday or Friday, being apprehensive I should be apprehended and having about 4 or 5 of said counterfeit bills, I took them all out of my pocket they being in a rag, tyed a stone to them and throwd' em as far as I could into the river at Providence ferry." Ide added that Constant Barney was present when he received bills from Sullivan and that he, Ide and Sullivan hid out in the woods near Mendon and Worcester. Ide had behind him a pair of saddlebags. Sullivan caused him to stop beside a great rock, unbuckled the bags and buried something, which was, as Sullivan told him, a plate and print. Ide was presented for passing counterfeits to Benjamin Thurber and Edward Bosworth, to both of which indictments he pleaded guilty, whereupon he was sentenced according to law. In case he could not pay costs and double damages, he might be sold for a term of not more than seven years.¹⁰¹ Ide was pilloried and cropped in Newport by Captain Job Bennett, Jr.¹⁰²

Elisha Luther was arrested and charged with putting off one of the £16 counterfeits to Daniel Bosworth of Newport — the bill, numbered 460, incidentally has been preserved in the court files — but the grand jury returned the presentment *ignoramus*, as was also the case with a second indictment in which Luther was charged with putting off a false £16 Rhode Island bill (number 323) and a counterfeit 40s. New Hampshire bill to Sarah Nichols, wife of Kendal Nichols of Newport.¹⁰³

¹⁰¹ NCSC Min. Bk. E, p. 29 and NCSC Files, August, 1755; Petitions 11, p. 118.

¹⁰² *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, p. 455.

¹⁰³ NCSC Files, August, 1755.

Constant Barney, Jr., of Rehoboth, laborer and house carpenter, who had been mentioned by both Ide and Munroe, was charged with passing a bad £16 note to Daniel Dunham, Jr., of Newport, gentleman, and the grand jury found a true bill.¹⁰⁴ His case, however, does not appear to have been prosecuted further, for no record of it is found in the minute books of the court.

Among Sullivan's closest associates in New Hampshire was a joiner of Nottingham West named Benjamin Winn. This individual had been seized on suspicion of counterfeiting and imprisoned in Portsmouth but he broke jail one night and fled to Rhode Island.¹⁰⁵ On April 7, 1755, he was taken up in Newport and examined by Justices Scott, Bours and Howard on suspicion of putting off false New Hampshire bills. These he claimed he had borrowed, in the amount of about £56, chiefly in £8 and 24s. notes, from Samuel Dusten of Haverhill. Dusten, as the justices doubtless knew, if only from the newspapers, was a notorious counterfeiter and associate of Owen Sullivan.¹⁰⁶ Winn was indicted for having passed a false 24s. New Hampshire note to Josiah Lyndon, Jr., a shopkeeper of Newport, but the grand jury did not find a true bill. Winn was, however, further presented for having put off to another shopkeeper of Newport, Gideon Sisson, in payment for a hat, a false £8 New Hampshire bill, number 9870, of the emission of 1743. This time the grand jury found a true bill, to which Winn pleaded not guilty. He was tried, brought in guilty and sentenced in accordance with law.¹⁰⁷ He was set in the pillory of Newport and cropped by Captain Job Bennett, Jr.¹⁰⁸

Sheriff Joseph Scott of Newport County had discovered some of the copper plates used by the counterfeiters.¹⁰⁹ Early in January, 1757,

¹⁰⁴ NCSC Files, August, 1755; Accounts Allowed 1755.

¹⁰⁵ See Kenneth Scott, "Counterfeiting in Colonial New Hampshire," *Historical New Hampshire* XIII (1957), pp. 19-20, 25-26.

¹⁰⁶ *Ibid.*, pp. 22, 25.

¹⁰⁷ NCSC Min. Bk. E, pp. 26-27 and NCSC Files, August, 1755.

¹⁰⁸ *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, p. 455.

¹⁰⁹ *R.I. Col. Rec.* V, pp. 454-455.

the General Assembly voted that a committee consisting of Peter Bours and William Read should receive the plates from the governor and representatives of the late Deputy Governor Nichols and cause them to be defaced.¹¹⁰ Joseph Munroe was one of the gang who apparently possessed a considerable estate, for this was sold by Nathaniel Bristol, Sheriff of Bristol County, since it was forfeit to the government, and out of it three holders of counterfeit bills, Benjamin Miller, John Cole and Edward Bosworth of Warren, were recompensed.¹¹¹ Through Winn and other agents of Sullivan such great quantities of false currency of New Hampshire had been brought into Rhode Island from New Hampshire and Connecticut that the General Assembly ordered that after August 1, 1756, no New Hampshire bills were to be legal tender in Rhode Island.¹¹² The directors of the lottery for building Fort George had unwittingly taken in so many of Sullivan's counterfeits that on September 6, 1756, the General Assembly voted that the directors should be indemnified for the damages they had received through the false bills.¹¹³

Sullivan had associates in Providence County as well as in Newport County. Some idea of their operations was given by a spinster named Sarah Staples of Cumberland. Upon examination she related how Owen Sullivan at Benjamin Bishop's in Wrentham had engraved a plate for the 1750 Rhode Island emission. She, Enoch, Ebenezer and Benjamin Streeter assisted in the work, while Ebenezer Streeter and Benjamin Bishop purchased paper in Providence and Moses Walcot purchased a further supply. All shared in the product: the Streeters secured about £1000, Walcot £350 and Bishop £100. Soon after this, Sarah affirmed, Sullivan, Bishop and Benjamin Farrington undertook to counterfeit the £16 Crown Point bills.

Another individual, Samuel Wright, Jr., of Exeter in King's County, on May 31, 1755, gave evidence at Newport to the effect that a man

¹¹⁰ *Id.* VI, p. 5.

¹¹¹ *Id.* VI, p. 153.

¹¹² *Id.* VI, p. 508.

¹¹³ *Id.* VI, p. 512.



A counterfeit forty shilling Rhode Island bill made by Owen Sullivan and passed by his confederate Joseph Steel.
(Courtesy of the Connecticut State Library)

who called himself Joseph Smith and claimed to live in Dedham had given him, in payment for two quarts of oats, an £8 bill, which Smith said he got from Judge Jenkes in Providence. Later Wright saw Smith in Newport but the people of the house where Smith was staying called him *Streeter*. Wright had found out that the £8 bill was bad, and when he complained, Streeter tried to buy it back from him.

Joseph Streeter of Cumberland, husbandman, was taken into custody and was indicted at the Superior Court in Providence for several crimes: for passing a counterfeit £16 bill to Solomon Finney of Cumberland, yeoman, from whom he later repurchased the note for £14; for uttering another such bill to Jeremiah Jenckes of Cumberland; for putting off a bad £8 bill to James Rogers of Newport, shopkeeper; for passing another false £8 bill to Joseph Lapham of Cumberland, yeoman, and still another to Samuel Wright, Jr., of Exeter, yeoman. Streeter was convicted of uttering the bill to James Rogers and was sentenced in accordance with law. He was to be pilloried, cropped and branded on October 10, 1755, between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m.¹¹⁴

Abijah Smith and Enoch and Ebenezer Streeter were likewise arrested, the first two by David Dexter. At the September, 1755, term of the Superior Court in Providence Enoch Streeter of Cumberland, blacksmith, was indicted for having, in December, 1754, as an accomplice of Owen Sullivan, made a stamp and screw for coining dollars. He was tried, convicted and sentenced to stand a half hour in the pillory on October 18 between 8 a.m. and 4 p.m. and to pay costs. He was further indicted for having on July 1, 1755, passed a false £8 Rhode Island bill to Jonathan Ormsby of Cumberland, yeoman, but the petty jury found Enoch not guilty. Still another indictment, this for his having uttered a counterfeit £8 bill of the emission of 1750 to Richard Stratton of Cumberland, was returned *billa vera* by the grand jury, but as he had been acquitted on the indictment for passing

¹¹⁴ Evidence concerning Joseph Streeter is found in PCSC Files, 1755-1757 and PCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 159-160.

the bill to Ormsby, proceedings on this indictment were stayed and he was ordered released on payment of costs.

At the March, 1756, term of the Superior Court in Providence Enoch Streeter was again indicted, this time for having assisted Owen Sullivan. Enoch decided not to contend and was sentenced to stand a half hour in the pillory on April 1, to be jailed for ten days, to be cropped and branded, to pay costs and double damages, to forfeit his estate and, if his property could not cover damages and costs, he was to be sold out of the colony for not more than one year.¹¹⁵

Ebenezer Streeter, of Cumberland, a blacksmith like Enoch, was indicted for having, as an accomplice of Sullivan, made an iron stamp and screws for making dollars, but the petty jury brought in a verdict of not guilty.¹¹⁶

Another person mentioned by Sarah Staples, namely Benjamin Bishop of Wrentham, Suffolk County, Massachusetts, yeoman, was charged with having assisted Owen Sullivan by procuring paper and by furnishing him with a convenient place for his counterfeiting. The grand jury in March, 1756, found a true bill against Bishop, but there is no evidence that he was ever brought to trial.¹¹⁷

At the March, 1756, term of the Superior Court of Providence Moses Walcot of Cumberland, yeoman, was indicted for getting the paper, for aiding Sullivan in printing bills and for receiving a large quantity of the counterfeits. The grand jury returned a true bill but there seems to be no record of any further prosecution of the case. At the September term, 1755, Walcot had been charged with passing a false £8 bill and making an allowance of forty shillings to Solomon Finney for taking the same but the grand jury had returned this indictment *ignoramus*.¹¹⁸

Two suspected counterfeiters of Dighton, Massachusetts, James and John Waldron, were tracked down, arrested and delivered to

¹¹⁵ PCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 157, 158, 165 and PCSC Files 1755-1757; Accounts Allowed 1755.

¹¹⁶ PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 157.

¹¹⁷ PCSC Files 1755-1757.

¹¹⁸ PCSC Files 1755-1757.

Captain John Wheaton at the Rhode Island line by Philip Whittaker.¹¹⁹ There is no record of their prosecution, so they may have been released, broken jail, or skipped bail. Also taken in Massachusetts was James Wyman of Woburn. The sheriff, one Trowbridge, and others seized him in Woburn and found in his possession hundreds of counterfeit 40s. Rhode Island bills of the emission of February 2, 1741. Wyman was jailed and was to be tried at Charlestown in January, 1755. Ebenezer Kimball and others who had passed some counterfeits of the same denomination in New Hampshire were pursued but escaped to Rhode Island or Connecticut.¹²⁰

The authorities discovered other counterfeiters through the examination at Providence on September 1, 1755, of Captain John Wheaton, taken by Justices George Taylor, James Angel and Samuel Chase. Wheaton told how he had gone riding in company with David Thayer of Providence to purchase horses and how on the way home Thayer characterized Owen Sullivan, John King, and Elisha Bellow as “clever” fellows, remarking that Bellow was a partner of his. Thayer told him that he had secured counterfeit money and passed it, adding that Colonel Updike’s name “was damnd hard to counterfeit” but that Sullivan had done it to perfection. David Thayer was charged with making £16 bills from two rolls and his indictment was returned *billa vera* by the grand jury at the September, 1755, term of the Superior Court in Providence. To this he pleaded not guilty,¹²¹ after which there is no further mention of his case.

Bellow apparently was not taken, but John King of Mendon, yeoman, and David Thayer were pursued to Woonsocket Falls by a posse headed by Nathan Thayer. King was arrested and indicted at the September, 1755, term of the Superior Court in Providence for having made a press and two rolls for printing money and for having struck off fourteen £16 bills and sixteen £8 bills from the same, which presentment was returned *billa vera*. While King was in jail in the

¹¹⁹ R.I. Accounts Allowed 1756.

¹²⁰ R.I. Letters 1, vol. 4, p. 45.

¹²¹ PCSC Files 1755–1757.

custody of the sheriff of Providence County, he escaped on October 12, 1755, allegedly through the help of Sarah Staples, who was one of the gang of counterfeiters. Sarah was duly indicted for aiding in the escape but when tried was found not guilty.¹²² David Burr, housewright and keeper of the jail when King broke out, was fined £100 for his negligence but later managed to have the fine remitted.¹²³

It was discovered that Sullivan had spent some four months in making plates at the house of Solomon Finney and his wife Mary in Cumberland. While Sullivan was there, Samuel Bartlet of Cumberland in November, 1754, furnished an £8 Rhode Island bill of the emission of 1750 to serve as a model and made engraving tools, all of which he gave to Finney to take to Sullivan. Bartlet was indicted, tried, convicted and sentenced in accordance with law. Jeremiah Whipple searched Finney's house for counterfeit dollars, and David Dexter took Finney and his wife to jail in Providence, but apparently they were not tried.¹²⁴ Bartlet's corporal punishment, an hour in the pillory, cropping, and branding took place on October 18.¹²⁵ He fell ill in jail, where he was attended by Dr. John Gold, and died in September, 1756.¹²⁶ His widow, Mary, by the forfeiture of her husband's property, was reduced from a state of affluence to one of great distress.¹²⁷

Two others of the gang were likewise brought to justice: Richard Smith of Glocester, yeoman, alias Esq., was indicted in September, 1755, for having the previous year procured several parcels of fake £16 bills of the emission of 1750 from David Thayer and for having passed two of them to Abraham Smith of Smithfield. He was tried and convicted at the March, 1756, term of the Providence County Superior Court and sentenced in accordance with law.¹²⁸ Smith had recently

¹²² PCSC Files 1755-1757 and PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 158; Accounts Allowed 1755.

¹²³ Petitions 9, p. 169.

¹²⁴ Accounts Allowed 1755.

¹²⁵ PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 161.

¹²⁶ Accounts Allowed 1756.

¹²⁷ Petitions 10, p. 125.

¹²⁸ The sheriff could find no estate of Smith's except household goods absolutely necessary for use by the family (Miscellaneous Counterfeiting 1745-1777 (ms. in OSS)).

been one of the judges of the Providence Inferior Court and a candidate for the post of assistant. David Thayer, who had been indicted, pleaded not guilty and then retracted his plea, accused Smith of being his confederate, and bore witness against him at his trial. When Smith was convicted only on the evidence of Thayer, he petitioned for a new trial, charging that Thayer was a convict and infamous, but his petition was refused.¹²⁹ At the same term another of the rogues, David Brown of Scituate in Providence County, was captured by Nathan Jenkes and four aides, was tried, found guilty of passing one of the £16 counterfeits to Judah Brown of the same town, and sentenced as provided by law.¹³⁰

Finally, Benjamin Belknap of Providence, yeoman, was charged with passing another of the £16 counterfeits to Ephraim Whipple, who in turn passed it to Resolved Waterman of Smithfield.¹³¹ There is no record of further action, so apparently Belknap was never prosecuted.

The convictions secured in Newport and Providence were duly noted in the press of the day. The *Boston Evening-Post* of September 8, 1755, printed an item from Newport to the effect that four or five men had lately been found guilty of passing Sullivan's counterfeit money and that several other fellows were in jail for the same offense. The account added that the criminals in jail had confessed that the gang had struck off currency to the value of £50,000 old tenor, but spoiled £10,000 in signing the bills. The same newspaper in the issue of October 27, 1755, stated that about ten days before three men of note had stood in the pillory at Providence and had their ears cropped and had been branded for counterfeiting dollars and paper money. The day before two others had been brought in guilty of being concerned in making false notes. Several others were in jail and were to be tried at the next court for the same crime.

It was provided in June, 1754, that anyone who made a counterfeiting plate or forged the signature of a signer of the bills should suffer

¹²⁹ Petitions 9-12, p. 95.

¹³⁰ PCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 163-165; Accounts Allowed 1755.

¹³¹ PCSC Files 1755-1757.

death without benefit of clergy. The next year it was enacted by the Assembly that if process should be issued against anyone for making or passing counterfeit bills and the person should conceal himself, then the sheriff of the county was to seize all the property of such person. The sheriff was at the same time to put up notices requiring the person to surrender to the authorities. If the fugitive did not then give himself up within three months, he was to forfeit all his property.¹³²

Owen Sullivan's headquarters had been located in Dutchess County, New York, where some of his associates had his plates at the time of his execution in 1756. Doubtless some of these associates were Eliphalet Stevens, Elisha Lewis and Samuel Gazell, from whom Thomas West of Dutchess County and Haggi Cooper admitted obtaining false twenty shilling Connecticut bills. West and Cooper were arrested in Providence County. West was examined on August 12, 1757, when he confessed that he had passed a false 20s. Connecticut note to Benjamin Thurber of Providence in payment for twelve horsewhips. He claimed that he had received three such bills of Caleb Blodget at old Fairfield the previous Friday and that he had passed one of them to Jonathan Ady of Bristol and another to an innkeeper at Narraganset. On August 13 upon further examination he told a different and probably the true story, which was confirmed by Cooper; namely, that about two months before in Dutchess County he obtained some bills from Stevens, Lewis and Gazell, to whom he gave a beaver hat for twenty-four shillings of the money. He had, he admitted, put off four bills to Benjamin Thurber, Benjamin Barber and someone at Narragansett Ferry.

West, who was a cordwainer by calling, was indicted in September, 1757, for having uttered a false 20s. Connecticut note of the emission of January, 1755, to Benjamin Thurber of Providence, shopkeeper. To this West pleaded guilty and was sentenced to stand half an hour in the pillory of Providence on October 15, to be cropped, branded, and pay such other penalties as were set by law.¹³³ As

¹³² R. I. Colony Records 6, pp. 113, 200, 459.

¹³³ PCSC Files 1755-1757 and PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 195.

Cooper apparently was not prosecuted, it is probable that he had been accepted as king's evidence for the prosecution of West, in case West pleaded not guilty.

Fifty-three of Sullivan's £8 Rhode Island counterfeits of the emission of 1750 were discovered, about June of 1757, by a certain Beach Cutler in the house in which he was dwelling. Apparently Cutler was in no wise suspected, for, after telling the Superior Court of King's County about his discovery, he was at once discharged and the bills were ordered burnt.¹³⁴

Kent County too was plagued by Sullivan's bad currency. At the October, 1752, term of the Superior Court of that county Anthony Barton of Warwick was indicted for having passed on June 16 a false £5 Rhode Island bill to an innholder of Warwick named Cotton Palmer. Barton's bail was set at £1,000 and his case came up for trial at the April term of the next year. He pleaded not guilty, was ably defended by his attorney, Richard Tree, and was acquitted.¹³⁵

At the October, 1753, sessions Attorney General Daniel Updike exhibited an information to the effect that Samuel Jones of Smithfield, late of Dutchess County; a bloomer, on October 17 brought into Rhode Island fifty-two counterfeit £16 Rhode Island bills. When questioned the next day, he pretended he had received them from Resolved Waterman of Smithfield. Jones pleaded guilty and was sentenced to stand in the pillory at East Greenwich for one hour on October 25, to have both ears cropped, to be imprisoned for a month, to pay double damages, and all costs and to forfeit the remainder of his estate.¹³⁶ The fact that he came from Dutchess County points clearly to his association with Sullivan's Dover Money Club.

Another rogue, who in all probability was connected with Sullivan's gang, was Hugh Gallaspy (or Gillespy). On July 29, 1754, he passed in Kent County to Joseph Stafford, Esq., a false Rhode Island bill of the emission of 1741. Gallaspy was tried at the October, 1754, term

¹³⁴ KCSC Min. Bk., June, 1757.

¹³⁵ KCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 14, 19-20.

¹³⁶ KCSC Min. Bk. A, pp. 29-30.

of the Superior Court, was convicted and received the same sentence as that given Jones the previous year. In case he could not pay double damages and costs, he might be sold for a period not to exceed three years. His woes, however, were not ended, for at the same court he was indicted for having stolen from Simon Fish of Barnstable, Massachusetts, a gelding worth £150. He was tried, convicted and sentenced to receive twenty lashes on October 19, to pay a fine of £100, as well as £200 to Simon Fish. In case his estate did not suffice to cover these items, he might be sold by the sheriff for a term not exceeding four years. It seemed, incidentally, that Gallaspy had also been using the name of Hugh Asper.¹³⁷

Presumably he somehow managed to pay up, or, as is quite possible, he may have escaped from jail or a master, for in August, 1755, he was arrested at Middletown, Connecticut, for passing bogus Rhode Island £5 notes, was tried, convicted and punished. As he was wanted for a like offense in Fairfield County, he was committed to jail to await trial. The Assembly, however, released him on condition that he enlist in the army or navy.¹³⁸

Not all counterfeiters in Rhode Island at this time appear to have operated in conjunction with Sullivan. It came to the notice of the authorities that Henry Reynolds of West Greenwich, Kent County, yeoman, was concerned in counterfeiting. On December 17, 1753, Jeffrey Watson, assistant, and Benoni Hale, justice of the peace, ordered Samuel Gardner of Exeter to arrest Reynolds and seize his estate. The same day Reynolds was apprehended, examined and committed to the jail in South Kingstown, of which Nathaniel Helme was the keeper. An attempt was made to free the prisoner, as a result of which special guard was provided. Despite this, on March 15, 1754, Reynolds, in the company of Daniel Butten who had been imprisoned for debt, broke out and fled. Sheriff Beriah Brown offered a reward of £150 for the capture of Reynolds, who was described as being about twenty-seven years old, round-shouldered, well-set, with a thick,

¹³⁷ KCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 46-47.

¹³⁸ Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial Connecticut*, p. 130-131.



Die used by Samuel Casey for making counterfeit dollars.

(Courtesy of the owner, Mrs. Clarkson A. Collins, Jr.)

sandy beard and a downcast look. He was wearing a blue double-breasted coat with brass buttons, an old camblet coat under it, and leather breeches. John Weight on horseback pursued Reynolds for seven days and apparently finally caught him.¹³⁹

At approximately the same time John Weight, with John Babcock as an aid, made hot pursuit after Samuel and Gideon Casey, James Barber, Stephen Cottrel, Jr., Samuel Sheldon, and John Rathbone, 3rd.¹⁴⁰ Gideon Casey had been fined in Philadelphia shortly before for passing false coin. Apparently he and his brother Samuel were not prosecuted at this time. Both were many years later arrested for counterfeiting, Gideon in New York City and Samuel in Rhode Island. At this time, 1754, the government seems to have proceeded against only Reynolds and Rathbone. At the April, 1754, term of the Superior Court of King's County Henry Reynolds of West Greenwich, Kent County, yeoman, and John Rathbone, 3rd, of Exeter, yeoman, were indicted for having encouraged William Reynolds, a silversmith of Exeter, to make plates for imitating bills. Six presentments were brought against Henry Reynolds: for having induced William Reynolds to make a plate for 40s. Rhode Island bills, another for striking 10s. Rhode Island notes, a third for 20s. Rhode Island bills, a fourth for 2s. 6d. Rhode Island notes, a fifth for the Connecticut 20s. bills, and a sixth for the New Hampshire 6s. denomination. Henry Reynolds pleaded guilty to each and was sentenced to stand an hour in the pillory on April 18, to be cropped and branded, to pay double damages and all costs, and to forfeit the remainder of his estate. Because he had, encouraged by the examining magistrates, made a full confession, Henry was granted a pardon by the Assembly.¹⁴¹

Three indictments were formed against Rathbone: for encouraging William Reynolds to make plates for striking the New Hampshire 2s. 6d., and 6s. denominations, and the Rhode Island 20s. bills. He

¹³⁹ Petitions 9, p. 89, 9-12, pp. 121, 125; 10, p. 62; Accounts Allowed 1756. Handbill dated March 16, 1754, signed Beriah Brown, Sheriff, advertising the reward for Reynold's capture (owned by J. Benjamin Nevin of Providence, R.I.).

¹⁴⁰ Accounts Allowed 1756.

¹⁴¹ KCSC Min. Bk. A, pp. 137-139; Petitions 5, p. 162; 7, p. 161.

pleaded guilty and was sentenced to the same punishment as Henry Reynolds, save that corporal punishment was to be inflicted on May 20.¹⁴²

The *Providence Gazette* of June 4, 1763, cautioned the public against counterfeit cobs and quarter-dollar pieces, which were indifferently done and might easily be distinguished from the genuine by their color, softness, and deficiency in weight. The same newspaper of January 28, 1764, warned that small bills of the last emission of Rhode Island had been altered with a pen, especially two shilling notes to ten and three shillings to thirty, whereby several persons had been imposed upon.

The alterer of the currency was doubtless young Robert Beverly (the name also appears as Bevelun), an apprentice to a tailor, Robert Leonard of Providence. On Tuesday, February 14, 1764, Beverly was in custody and was examined by Justices Samuel Chase and James Angell to whom he confessed that he had altered bills and passed one to Mr. Armstrong and another to Mr. Ollin. He added that no other person was concerned but that same afternoon he was interrogated again by Justices Chase and Nicholas Tillinghast. He then confessed that he had passed five more altered bills, one to Joseph Field, one to Jabez Pearce, one to the Widow Brown, one to Zephariah Randal and one to a certain Manchester. He claimed that he did this at the order of his master, Robert Leonard, who aided him in altering them. He also admitted that he had uttered nine such notes, seven of ten shillings altered from one shilling and ninepenny bills, two of five shillings altered from one shilling. At a further examination on March 5 the apprentice continued to charge his master with taking part in the altering. He added that among other purchases made with the counterfeits were a turkey, a loaf of bread, a quarter of veal, and a yard of cloth.

At the March, 1764, term of the Providence County Superior Court Beverly, described as under the age of 21, was indicted for having altered a bill of the emission of 1760 to ten shillings and having passed

¹⁴² KCSC Min. Bk. A, pp. 139-140.

it to Job Armstrong of Gloucester, yeoman. The defendant pleaded guilty and was sentenced to stand half an hour in the pillory, to be cropped and branded, to serve a term of 100 days in jail, to pay double damages and costs, and to forfeit his estate. The bill which he passed to Armstrong is preserved today in the files of the Superior Court in Providence. His master, Leonard, was released on March 7 on bail of £100, but apparently was never prosecuted.¹⁴³ The *Newport Mercury* of March 26, 1764, gave the lad's age as seventeen and reported that when he altered some of the bills, he not only erased the word *one* and inserted *ten* but also changed the date from 1762 to 1760.

On Monday, September 10, 1764, a coiner, Josiah Tabor, commonly called Friday Still, was taken up in Providence for passing false milled dollars, cobs, and smaller coin. A search of his person produced several pieces of bad money, recipes for mixing metals, and implements for finishing off the coin. The pieces he had passed were made of a base mixture and poorly done, but the cobs were good enough to deceive the unwary. Justice James Angell examined the prisoner and committed him to jail, there to await trial a week later.¹⁴⁴

Tabor was presented twice by the grand jury, once for having on September 8 passed to Benajah Billings of Providence, innholder, a false half cob and once for having on the same day put off a bad dollar to Benoni Pearce of Providence, merchant. Tabor (or Still) pleaded guilty to each indictment and on each was sentenced to pay costs, to stand a half hour in the pillory, to make restitution to the person damaged, and to spend thirty days in jail.¹⁴⁵

About a year later, in September, 1765, some false dollars, quarter dollars, and half pistareens were passed in Newport by Mary Pulman of Exeter, Rhode Island. Mary was apprehended and jailed. As a result three suspected confederates of hers, David and George Codnar and John (or Caleb) Bates, all of Exeter, were brought to Providence

¹⁴³ PCSC Files, 1764 and PCSC Min. Bk. I, p. 334.

¹⁴⁴ *Providence Gazette*, Sept. 15, 1764, p. 3.

¹⁴⁵ PCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 379-380; *Providence Gazette*, Sept. 29, 1764, p. 3.

and confined in the jail.¹⁴⁶ James Reynolds of West Greenwich and a certain Pollock were apparently arrested, but no one seems to have been prosecuted.

On the other hand, on Wednesday, November 13, according to the *Newport Mercury* of November 18, 1765, one Hoxsie was taken up in Newport and committed to prison, being convicted by his own confession of counterfeiting dollars and passing them to several persons in town. The forgeries were described as "extremely well executed, of full weight" and when they were allowed to fall, they rang like genuine coins. If, however, they were scraped with a knife, a color similar to copper would appear and the cheat might thus be discovered.

The excellence of the counterfeits was doubtless due to the fact that Samuel Hoxsie of South Kingstown was a silversmith, at the time residing in Warwick. In September of the following year six indictments against him were returned *billa vera* by the grand jury. To the first, in which he was charged with having uttered in Newport on November 12, 1765, two counterfeit Spanish milled dollars to Benjamin Brenton of that town, he pleaded not guilty, but was tried, convicted, and fined £5 and costs. In the other presentments he was charged with having passed on the same day, November 12, two base coins to David Lopez, merchant; a false dollar to Thomas Greene, shopkeeper; two bad dollars to Naphtali Hart, merchant; two more dollars to Bathsheba Martin, spinster; and four counterfeit dollars to Sarah Peckham, a widow. To all of these he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to pay costs and fines totalling £10.¹⁴⁷

Fines alone could scarcely exercise great restraint upon coiners. The *Providence Gazette* of July 4, 1767, warned the public of counterfeit dollars, dated 1747, 1756, 1757, 1758, 1759, and 1760, so well finished as hardly to be distinguished from good ones by close in-

¹⁴⁶ *Newport Mercury*, Sept. 16, 1765, p. 3; Reports to the General Assembly 3, p. 29; R.I. Colony Records 8, p. 717; Miscellaneous Counterfeiting 1745-1777 (Ms. in OSS), July 22, 1770.

¹⁴⁷ NCSC Min. Bk. E, pp. 304-306.

spection. The newspaper then gave this description of the pieces dated 1747: "The Metal is rather duller than the generality of the true ones, and often one Side or t'other is a little scratch'd as if touch'd with a File, the Size a small Matter broader and thicker, and does not ring so well as the true ones. The Impression is nearer to the Edge of the Metal on one Side than the other, and the indenting on the Edges less distinct and neat than the true ones, but the most remarkable Distinction is on the Edge right over the Point(.) after FERND. on the Arms Side; and over the Rose, after UNUM, on the Pillar Side, where there is in some of them an Inequality, in others a Flaw, as if in that Place the Metal had been pour'd into the Mould."

Two of the passers of these bad dollars were probably Silas Wood and Benoni Pendock, who by August 1, 1767, were in close confinement in Providence on the charge of passing false dollars.¹⁴⁸ On September 28 it was ordered by the Superior Court of Providence County that these two prisoners, with all things touching on their case, be carried by the sheriff of Providence County and delivered to the sheriff of Kent County to be tried at the next assizes.¹⁴⁹

At the October term of the Kent County Superior Court an indictment was found against Silas Wood of Coventry, husbandman, for having on July 4 in Coventry made a mold for casting dollars and another for making pistareens; it was further charged that he made two dollars and on July 15 passed them in Providence. Benoni Pendock, likewise of Coventry, yeoman, was presented for having aided Wood in committing these crimes. Both of the accused pleaded not guilty, and Pendock was tried and acquitted. Wood, however, on October 23, retracted his plea and was sentenced to stand an hour in the pillory at East Greenwich between 10 a.m. and noon on October 27. He was further sentenced to pay all costs. If these were not paid within ten days after his pillorying, the sheriff was ordered to sell him for a term not exceeding one year.¹⁵⁰

¹⁴⁸ *Providence Gazette*, Aug. 1, 1767, p. 3.

¹⁴⁹ PCSC Min. Bk., Sept. term, 1767.

¹⁵⁰ KCSC Min. Bk. I, pp. 296-297.

In 1766 the General Assembly of Rhode Island passed a law to prevent the counterfeiting of coins and the cutting or dividing of the same. It provided the penalty of death for counterfeiting British or foreign coin that was current or for passing such counterfeited money. The penalty for cutting the coins was set at ten times the sum passed, though cutting was specifically made legal for a goldsmith. A counterfeiter or a passer of false coin might be prosecuted under this law of 1766 or for an "offense at Common Law."¹⁵¹

The government of Rhode Island had grounds for uneasiness because of the increase in coining. In May, 1768, three men were committed to jail in Providence for counterfeiting pistareens made of copper. On these men were found molds for making English half crowns and dollars.¹⁵² There was then, in general, a flood of bogus coin. In 1772 a committee of the Assembly was appointed to prepare a bill to prevent introducing and passing false copper money in the colony.¹⁵³

In August, 1752, Gideon Casey, a silversmith of Exeter, Rhode Island, had been caught in Philadelphia when he tried to pass off a false doubloon and had been tried, convicted, and fined £50 and costs. Sixteen years later a gang of coiners, working in a subterranean workshop in the wood near by, was broken up, and Gideon Casey fled in a schooner to Connecticut, where he made contact with local counterfeiters and passed some bogus currency. Thence he proceeded to New York and was on the point of sailing to North Carolina when the authorities, tipped off by a letter from Connecticut, raided the schooner and arrested all on board. On the ship were found a bag with instruments for making dollars of the years 1763 and 1764, plates for striking North Carolina currency, bogus New York bills, recipes for smelting and varnishing metals, and molds and stamps for making pistareens. Because of "want of sufficient evidence" Gideon

¹⁵¹ *Charter, Acts and Laws of His Majesty's Colony of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations* (Newport: Samuel Hall, 1767), p. 36; R.I. Colony Records 8, pp. 430-431, 590.

¹⁵² *Boston Evening-Post*, May 8, 1768, p. 2.

¹⁵³ R.I. Colony Records 9, p. 121.

and his companions were acquitted and he vanished completely from the scene.¹⁵⁴

Such, however, was not the case with his better known brother Samuel, also a distinguished silversmith. "Silver Sam" had been in partnership with Gideon for some ten years, until in 1763 Gideon sold out his interest to his brother. One September morning in 1764 a fire, kindled by the intense heat from the goldsmith's forge, reduced the house to ashes, and the loss was estimated in the press of the day at £2,000 sterling. Samuel then removed to Helme House at Little Rest, where he took up or rather continued the counterfeiting which had been previously at least a sideline.

Before long Samuel Casey had a collection of dies secured from Azariah Philips, Amasa Jones, Samuel Hoxie, a certain Tonkray, and Noah Colton (who in turn got them from Glazier Wheeler). A gang was formed, each member of which was required to take a solemn oath not to reveal "the secrets of any other man, woman or child without the consent of company or companions" and to swear: "If I am not true to you and do not keep all your Councell and your Secrets I pray God to shut me out of Heaven and to make all my Prayers to become Sin."

The counterfeiting was chiefly carried on in Samuel Casey's garret or in that of "Dr." Samuel Wilson, a blacksmith who lived on Tower Hill. These men had great screws, with which they turned out false moidores, half joes and dollars, using metal previously mixed with base in varying proportions. Sometimes their customers would bring them blanks of mixed metal to be stamped. Among the confederates were Noah Colton and William Reynolds, both silversmiths, and a large number of passers.

As early as February, 1768, the Massachusetts authorities had been informed of Casey's connection with Joshua Howe, a notorious counterfeiter, and doubtless the magistrates in Rhode Island had been alerted. On July 10, 1770, the law struck, starting with the arrest of William Hiams, an innkeeper. Hiams began to talk and admitted receiving from

¹⁵⁴ See Kenneth Scott, "Gideon Casey, Rhode Island silversmith," *Rhode Island History* 12 (1953), 50-54.

Thomas Clark bad coin made "by the ole Man upon the Hill," meaning Casey. Clark was promptly seized; a press was found in Casey's house; and stamps and coining instruments were found on his property.

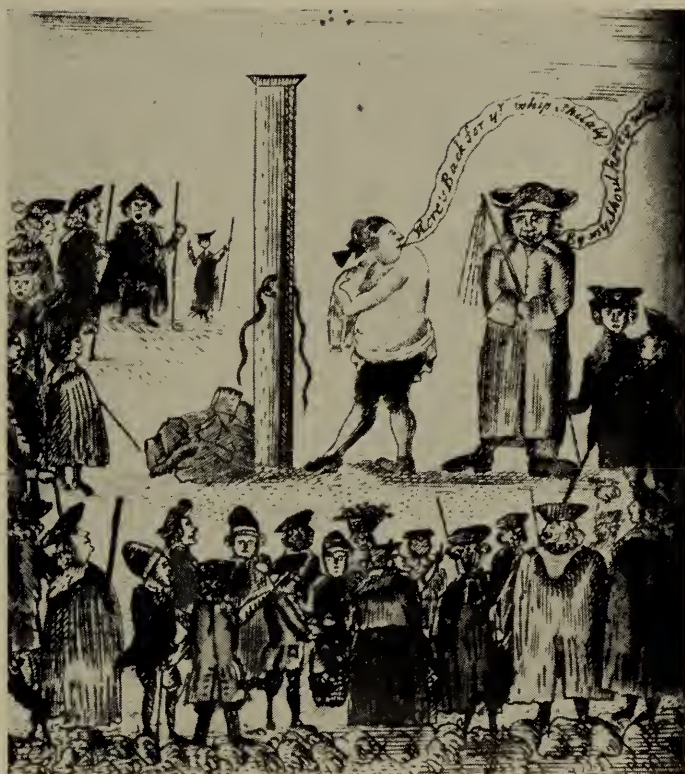
Just before the raid Casey, somehow notified of what was up, wrote an agonized and extremely illiterate note to his accomplice Wilson. The document fell into the hands of the officers, and under relentless questioning Casey admitted that two squares in the note were meant to indicate dies for counterfeiting.

Fifteen men were arrested, but only five: Casey, Wilson, Elisha and William Reynolds, and Thomas Clark were indicted. The jury amazingly enough brought in Casey not guilty, whereupon the court found the verdict so contrary to law and evidence that it refused to accept it. The jury, sent out again, brought in a verdict of guilty if Casey's own confession might be accepted as evidence. The judges promptly acquiesced and sentenced him to be hanged. Wilson, Clark, and William Reynolds were all convicted and branded and cropped before a crowd of 3,000 persons on Tower Hill on October 26. Elisha Reynolds was not prosecuted, and costs against him were remitted because he gave valuable information.

Casey petitioned the General Assembly for mercy, but before that body reached any decision, a throng of persons with their faces thoroughly blackened riotously assembled on Saturday night, November 3, broke open the jail of King's County, and liberated all the counterfeiters save Wilson, who was too ill to flee.

Governor Wanton offered a reward of £50 for the capture of Casey and a like sum for the discovery of one or more of the men who broke open the jail. Eleven arrests were made but only three of the rioters were punished with stiff fines. During the Revolution, in September 1779, the Assembly, at the request of Samuel Casey's wife Martha, voted the silversmith a full pardon, but "Silver Sam" never took advantage of it.¹⁵⁵

¹⁵⁵ For evidence concerning Casey and his gang, see Kenneth Scott, "Samuel Casey, platero y falsario," *Numisma* (1954), pp. 35-40 and *Counterfeiting in Colonial America*, pp. 227-235; also KCSC Min. Bk. B, pp. 262-270, 290-293, 313-314; R.I. Colony Records 8, p. 741.



Joshua Howe at the Whipping Post,
from an engraving made by Nathaniel Hurd in 1762
(*Courtesy of the Boston Public Library*)

It was reported in the *Providence Gazette* of August 29, 1772, that five suspected counterfeiters had been arrested at Scituate and jailed in Providence, and the same newspaper of September 19 reported that three of them had been indicted. Some of the skullduggery that had been going on was brought to light through the examination on October 6, 1772, of Levi Colvin of Scituate, yeoman, by Justices Stephen Hopkins and Jabez Bowen. His story was that about the last of June Phillip Aylesworth, Jr., and Benjamin Lumbard informed him that they could obtain false money that would pass by giving one good dollar for two counterfeits. A fortnight later Aylesworth provided horses and money for travelling expenses, whereupon Colvin and Lumbard set out for Great Barrington, Massachusetts, to get counterfeit money made by a silversmith named Gilbert Belcher.

Belcher had been earlier arrested in Connecticut and convicted of coining, after which he removed to Great Barrington and there continued his nefarious activities. When Colvin and Lumbard arrived, Colvin saw a number of false New York bills struck off by Belcher, who gave Lumbard between £15 and £16 in New Jersey counterfeit notes. At the moment he was out of counterfeit dollars, but agreed to supply Lumbard in five or six weeks with 400 dollars, for which Lumbard was to pay 200 dollars in cash and horses.

In due time Phillip Aylesworth, Jr., James Aylesworth, and Lumbard set out with six or seven horses for Great Barrington, and upon their return eight or ten days later they informed Colvin that they had left the horses with Belcher, who did not have the money but would provide it a fortnight later. In the latter part of September Phillip Aylesworth, Jr., and Lumbard visited Belcher, returning with twenty false half joes apiece. Lumbard showed some of these to Colvin, telling him he planned to pass some in Middletown and then go to the West Indies and pass the rest.¹⁵⁶

Belcher was seized by the sheriff of Albany County, taken to New York, tried, convicted, and hanged along with a number of other

¹⁵⁶ PCSC Files 1773

notorious counterfeiters.¹⁵⁷ James Aylesworth and Lumbard do not seem to have been prosecuted, but Phillip Aylesworth and some of his associates were eventually taken into custody. It was reported in the press¹⁵⁸ that a girl of twelve was arrested in Providence for passing bad dollars and that her father was later arrested. The girl was Freelope Woodward, and her father was Jacob. On August 16 father and daughter were examined by Justice Jabez Bowen. Freelope said she passed two dollars to James Greene, a merchant, that she got them from her father and did not know from whom he obtained them. Jacob Woodward of North Providence pretended great innocence, asserting that he had had the dollars for some time, did not know from whom he secured them, and did not know they were false.¹⁵⁹

Two days later, however, Jacob was in a more talkative mood, when he was again examined, this time by Justice Bowen and Justice Joseph Nash. He admitted that about a month before he had obtained six dollars from Prince Bryant, who at the time had eleven or thirteen counterfeit dollars. Of the six false coins, Woodward gave three to his daughter to spend, passed one himself to Abner Thayer, and had two left in his pocketbook, which he secreted. He added that Bryant had purchased from John Arnold of Smithfield three false dollars for about two shillings apiece. Further, in the fall, Bryant had given him, Woodward, a counterfeit £3 New York bill, which Woodward used to pay a debt to William Proud. Proud sent the note to New York, whence it was returned as counterfeit, and Woodward had to take it back. Bryant, he said, had taken two or three such false bills the past winter to North Carolina but, as he claimed, did not try to pass them there.¹⁶⁰

Prince Bryant was soon taken into custody, and on August 30 he was examined by Justice Stephen Potter. When asked what William

¹⁵⁷ See Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial New York* (N.Y.: American Numismatic Society, 1953), pp. 159–160 and *Counterfeiting in Colonial Connecticut* (N.Y.: American Numismatic Society, 1957), pp. 163–164.

¹⁵⁸ For example see the *Newport Mercury*, Aug. 30, 1773, p. 3.

¹⁵⁹ PCSC Files 1773.

¹⁶⁰ PCSC Files 1773.

Love had told him about making counterfeit dollars the past fall, Bryant answered that during a conversation about the middle of November Love informed him that in an underground cellar to the northeast of his house he had a large screw with which he could impress 400 or 500 dollars a day. He was, he added, at the moment in need of a workman to coin the dollars, for the one who used to do it had gone to Providence to live. Bryant asked if Anson was the person, but got no answer.

Bryant then admitted that he told Love he had obtained from Caleb Eddy of Spencer Town in New York plates for making North Carolina bills and further gave Love a line to Jacob Woodward at whose house he might see them. Bryant had travelled with Eddy from Providence to Connecticut, stopping first at Love's in Coventry, where, as he said, they expected to meet Phillip Aylesworth and also one Fencher (or Felcher) alias Casey from New York Province. As they did not find Aylesworth and Felcher, they sought them first at Aylesworth's, then at George Taylor's, and finally found them at Love's when they returned there. The purpose of the meeting was to deliver to Aylesworth eight or nine half joes for which Aylesworth was to give them a horn. "We accordingly," continued Bryant, "went out into the shed to view a skunk Horn Phillip Aylesworth had there but he prized it too high, so he was to deliver one the next Week of eight or nine pounds value in Connecticut or New York government."

Bryant examined the half joes, finding some good but others poorly executed and telling Aylesworth so. To this Aylesworth retorted that his brother, Potter Aylesworth, who was then in the house, was going to Hispaniola where the counterfeit goldpieces "would answer well enough."

Bryant's business at Aylesworth's was to obtain directions from Belcher about stamping North Carolina paper money, and in this he was successful. Aylesworth asked Bryant if he could work in silver, as he wanted some dollars struck for his brother Potter. As for a pair of dies, Aylesworth said he could get them from William Love, but they

had a crack in them. Bryant, before leaving, suggested Caleb Eddy as a man capable of coining the dollars.¹⁶¹

A few days later Stephen Hopkins, chief justice of the Superior Court and Jabez Bowen, a justice of the peace, examined William Paine regarding one Thomas Anson, suspected of coining. Paine admitted seeing Anson at Deacon Belknap's and purchasing at Anson's directions a number of items which would be employed in counterfeiting coins: some borax, a pound of arsenic (this from Jabez Bowen), one or two ounces of sal ammoniac, six or eight ounces of arsenic, a pound of saltpeter (these items from Dr. Throop) and two or three nests of crucibles from Thurber and Catson.¹⁶²

After so much activity by the magistrates, several suspected counterfeiters were indicted at the September term of the Supreme Court in Providence.¹⁶³

One of them, Phillip Aylesworth of Scituate, laborer, was presented for having had false half joes, but was tried and acquitted; William Paine of Johnston, charged with having made thirty Spanish dollars, was found not guilty by a jury; Jacob Woodward, of North Providence, yeoman, accused of having passed three false half dollars and having made a number of ten shilling North Carolina bills of the emission of March 9, 1754, at first pleaded guilty on Thursday but on Saturday retracted his plea and, amazingly enough, got off with a fine of £36 and payment of costs.¹⁶⁴

About the middle of June, 1772, James Budd and a certain Lemuel Gustine (or Gascoigne) were arrested and jailed in Newport. Some ten weeks before they had been in Providence, passed counterfeit bills, and then gone eastward. They next purchased a sloop, presumably with false currency. In this craft they sailed from Nantucket, together with some others, to Mackerel Cove, where they cast anchor. Budd and Gustine thereupon went to Newport, where they engaged

¹⁶¹ PCSC Files, 1773.

¹⁶² Examination of William Paine, taken Sept. 4, 1773, in PCSC Files, 1773.

¹⁶³ *Providence Gazette*, Sept. 4, 1773, p. 3; Sept. 11, p. 3.

¹⁶⁴ PCSC Files, 1773; *Providence Gazette*, Sept. 18, p. 3.

an engraver to cut a plate for the escutcheon or border of a forty shilling bill of New York. Before the work was done, the engraver chanced to see a New York bill and thus discovered what business he was about. He denounced the pair to Judge Hazard; the couple was arrested; and the sloop was seized. Although Budd and Gustine were very close-mouthed, it became clear that they were concerned in counterfeiting with one Wills of Connecticut and a certain Smith of New York.¹⁶⁵

James Budd, mariner, was charged with having on May 10, 1772, passed a counterfeit ten shilling New York bill to a widow named Margaret Chace. Budd pleaded guilty to his indictment and was sentenced to pay all costs of conviction and prosecution and a fine of £100.¹⁶⁶ Gustine (or Gascoigne) was indicted for having on June 4, 1772, passed to Nathan Bull of Newport, mariner, a false New York twenty shilling bill. The King's Attorney produced three scrawled notes from Budd to Gustine in which Budd assured his accomplice that he might depend on him if the prosecution tried to use him, Budd, as a witness against him and asking the same favor of Gustine.¹⁶⁷ Constables Abraham Van Gelder and Benjamin Quereau of New York City were sent by the Province of New York to Newport to bring back Budd and Gustine,¹⁶⁸ but they certainly did not take Gustine, and there is no record concerning Budd.

Gustine, soon after his arrest, was transferred from Newport to Providence. There on August 17 he broke jail and escaped with the aid, it was believed, of Andrew Aldrich of Johnston, a deputy sheriff. Aldrich, it was charged, fed and concealed Gustine at his house in Johnston and then secured horses and a person to spirit the fugitive away. At the September term, 1773, of the Superior Court of Providence County Aldrich was indicted for aiding in Gustine's jailbreak and also for having on July 16, 1773, himself counterfeited 300

¹⁶⁵ See Kenneth Scott, *Counterfeiting in Colonial New York*, pp. 145-147.

¹⁶⁶ NCSC File 13608; NCSC Min. Bk. F, p. 36.

¹⁶⁷ NCSC File 13, 608.

¹⁶⁸ Ms. Minutes of the Council of N. Y. (in the N. Y. State Library in Albany) 26, p. 332.

Spanish dollars, but he was tried and found not guilty on both counts.¹⁶⁹

It was reported in the newspapers that during the first week in September four persons were committed to jail in Providence and one in East Greenwich on suspicion of counterfeiting and that some of their implements had been discovered.¹⁷⁰ Perhaps Aldrich, Jacob Woodward, and Phillip Aylesworth were among the four in prison in Providence.

There was no abatement in counterfeiting after the outbreak of the Revolution, for the British almost at once began to counterfeit the money of the Congress and of the states, while there was also the usual amount of ordinary counterfeiting by criminals. The people of Providence in April, 1776, were cautioned to beware of poorly done forgeries of the four shilling Rhode Island bills of the emission of May, 1775, and of one shilling bills that had been altered to ten.¹⁷¹

The last recorded case of counterfeiting in Rhode Island before the signing of the Declaration of Independence was peculiar in that real bills were involved. David Wilkinson, a justice of the peace, who had been appointed by the General Assembly to superintend the printing of some of its emission of paper currency, took home half sheets of money that was considered faulty. One such half sheet had been placed by him in a law book to be smoothed out. It chanced that on a public or town meeting day there were gathered in Wilkinson's house in Providence Daniel Jackson, Isaac Tuckerman, Nicholas Clarke, Hopestill McNeal, Thomas Manchester, and a housewright named William Hutton. The men were "playing for a Bowl of Punch" or some small matter.

Hutton opened the law book, found the half sheet, made up of four bills, and the party was jesting about them when Wilkinson entered, angrily remarked that the bills were neither signed nor numbered and Hutton put them back in the book. Two weeks later, however, the housewright returned, abstracted the bills, numbered them and

¹⁶⁹ PCSC Min. Bk. III, pp. 253-258; the *Providence Gazette*, Sept. 11, 1773, p. 3.

¹⁷⁰ *Providence Gazette*, Sept. 4, 1773, p. 3; *Newport Mercury*, Sept. 6, 1773, p. 3.

signed them, forging the signatures of the three signers, but by mistake or ignorance leaving off the final *e* from the names *Clarke* and *Greene*.

Presently Hutton passed off the four notes, one to Benjamin Nichols, keeper of the White Horse Tavern in Newport, one to a widow named Smith in the same town, one to Captain Joseph Manchester, and one to Stephen Morse, a silversmith of Providence. Daniel Mowry, Jr., was sent from Newport to search for the counterfeiter. Hutton was detected, arrested, and indicted for passing the bill to Morse and was sentenced upon pleading guilty. He was lucky enough to get off by paying costs, a fine of £15, and serving one month in jail.¹⁷²

¹⁷¹ *Providence Gazette*, April 13, 1776, p. 3.

¹⁷² *Providence Gazette*, June 22, 1776, p. 3; PCSC Files, 1776; PCSC Min. Bk. II, p. 343; R.I. Colony Records 9, p. 434.

CONCLUSION

It will never be known how much Rhode Island currency was counterfeited during the Colonial Period or, indeed, the quantity of false money put off in that colony. The spurious bills and coin were a genuine threat to trade and business and a source of constant embarrassment to the authorities. The government received at least some £1,100 passed by the Greenmans. Mary Peck Butterworth and her gang operated without detection from 1716 to 1723; on two men apprehended in Springfield in 1739 were found £400 in false £5 Rhode Island notes; at one time Joseph Boyce of Salem had £950 of counterfeits in his possession; Robert Neal brought from Ireland thousands of pounds in bad money; Jacob Wiley obtained £1,370 in counterfeits from one individual; Owen Sullivan and his associates struck off £50,000 in bad bills, though they spoiled £10,000 of them in signing.

The desire to make money dishonestly often led persons of wealth and standing to turn to counterfeiting, as, for example, in the case of the Greenmans or John Potter. Individuals skilled in working in metal seem frequently to have succumbed to temptation, for among the counterfeiters whose names appear in this colony are eight silver-smiths, five blacksmiths, one bloomer and one clockmaker; five are mariners, four cordwainers, two millers, seven housewrights, joiners or carpenters, a cooper, a saddler, a pedler, three tailors, a bricklayer, a boatman, a wheelwright, an innkeeper, five laborers and sixteen persons designated as yeomen, husbandmen or farmers; sometimes officials were involved in the crime, as Captain Greenman, once an assistant, Silas Greenman, a justice of the peace, and Andrew Aldrich, a deputy sheriff.

Court records or the newspapers reveal fifty-three cases of convictions (or confessions of guilt), and seventeen of acquittal; in some thirteen instances grand juries refused to indict; seventeen persons were arrested but not prosecuted; two, John Burdick and Zephaniah

Stephens, skipped bail; two, Joseph Stephens and John Rosier, got off through legal technicalities; one man, Frederick Sturmey, was extradited to another colony; three, Edward Greenman, Jr., John King and Lemuel Gustine, escaped from jail; Thomas Irons and Dr. Tallman fled. Many persons were accepted as King's Evidence, and thus were not prosecuted, for the testimony of one or more accomplices was usually necessary to secure a conviction.

The laws were in general savage, though occasionally people got off with a fine and costs. Most of the time sentences of cropping, branding, pillorying and imprisonment were imposed, though often a stiff fine and payment of costs were open as an alternative to losing ears and standing in the pillory.

From the earliest times Rhode Island, like the other colonies, was plagued by counterfeiters and the vigilance of the government could not be relaxed, for there was a steady growth of organized gangs that worked in close cooperation. Many ignorant persons did not realize the devastating effect of bad money on the economy of the colony and such ignorance led to public apathy and the unwillingness of juries to convict counterfeiters. When the Revolution came, the gangs already existing found a new source of supply in New York, where the British printed vast sums that could be had for the cost of the paper and often for nothing at all.

INDEX OF PERSONS

- Abbot, John, 9.
 Ady, Jonathan, 46.
 Aldrich, Andrew, 61, 62, 64.
 Aldrich, Edward, 23.
 Allen, James, 6.
 Amos, Daniel, 2.
 Andrews, John, 5.
 Angell, James, 16, 43, 50, 51.
 Angell, John, 10.
 Angell, Mary, 10.
 Angell, Richard, 16.
 Anson, Thomas, 59, 60.
 Armstrong, Job, 50, 51.
 Arnold, Israel, 21, 23.
 Arnold, Job, 28.
 Arnold, John, 58.
 Arnold, Seth, 21, 23.
 Arnold, William, 22, 23.
 Ashcraft, Jedediah, 29.
 Atwood, Joseph, 5.
 Averell, Abijah, 34, 35.
 Averell, Samuel, 35.
 Averell, Solomon, 34.
 Aylesworth, James, 57, 58.
 Aylesworth, Phillip, Jr., 57, 58, 59, 60, 62.
 Aylesworth, Potter, 59.
 Ayres, Hopley, 13, 14.

 Babcock, John, 49.
 Bampfield, John, 13.
 Banks, Thomas, 5.
 Barber, Benjamin, 46.
 Barber, James, 49.
 Barker, John, 32.
 Barker, Peleg, 35.
 Barks, Daniel, 22.
 Barnard, Mr., 36.
 Barney, Constant, Jr., 36, 37, 38, 39.
 Barney, John, 37.
 Bartlet, Mary, 44.
 Bartlett, Moses, 22, 23.
 Bartlet, Samuel, 44.
 Barton, Anthony, 47.
 Bates, John (or Caleb), 51.
 Beadle, Thomas, 22, 23.
 Beatties, Hugh, 7.
 Beecher, Eliphalet, 31.
 Belcher, Gilbert, 57.
 Belknap, Benjamin, 45.
 Belknap, Deacon, 60.
 Bellow, Elisha, 43.
 Bennett, Job, 22.
 Bennett, Job, Jr., 36, 37, 38, 39.
 Bennet, John, 11.
 Beverly (or Bevelun), Robert, 50.
 Bill, Joseph (or John, alias Dr. Watson),
 29.
 Billings, Benajah, 51.
 Billings, Roger, 15.
 Bishop, Benjamin, 40, 42.
 Blackmore, James, 28.
 Blodget, Caleb, 46.
 Blowers, John, 33.
 Booker, Thomas, 4.
 Bosworth, Benjamin, 38.
 Bosworth, Daniel, 38.
 Bosworth, Edward, 38, 40.
 Bosworth, Henry, 21, 22.
 Bours, Peter, 39, 40.
 Bowden, Francis, 24.
 Bowen, Jabez, 57, 58, 60.
 Bowen, Simeon, 38.
 Boyce, Jacob, 21, 22.
 Boyce, Joseph, 22, 24, 26, 27, 64.
 Brenton, Benjamin, 52.
 Brenton, Jahleel, 9, 13, 24.
 Brewer, John, 2.
 Bristol, Nathaniel, 40.
 Brown, Mr., 10
 Brown, Beriah, 48, 49.

Brown, David, 45.
 Brown, James, 15.
 Brown, John, 8.
 Brown, Judah, 45.
 Brown, Samuel, 32.
 Brown, Thomas, 14.
 Brown, Widow, 50.
 Bryant, Prince, 58, 59, 60.
 Budd, James, 60, 61.
 Bull, Henry, 14.
 Bull, Nathan, 61.
 Burdick, Hubert, 25.
 Burdick, Hubert, Jr., 25.
 Burdick, John, 25, 64.
 Burlison, Habsabath, 14, 15.
 Burlison, John, 14.
 Burr, David, 44.
 Butten, Daniel, 48.
 Butterworth, John, Jr., 7.
 Butterworth, Mary Peck, 6, 7, 8, 64.

Casey, Gideon, 49, 54, 55.
 Casey, Martha, 56.
 Casey, Samuel, 49, 55, 56.
 Casno, Isaac, 10.
 Catson, 60.
 Chace, Margaret, 61.
 Chapin, Abel, 6.
 Chapin, Samuel, 6.
 Chase, Jonathan, 14.
 Chase, Samuel, 43, 50.
 Cheeseborough, Amos, 30.
 Cheeseborough, Mrs. Amos, 30.
 Church, Silas, 10.
 Clarke, Job, 34.
 Clarke, Joseph, 63.
 Clarke, Nicholas, 62.
 Clark, Thomas, 56.
 Clay, James, 38.
 Coddington, William, 9, 11.
 Codnar, David, 51.
 Codnar, George, 51.
 Cogswell, John, 34, 35.
 Coit, Daniel, 29.

Cole, John, 36, 37, 40.
 Collins, Daniel, 29.
 Colton, Noah, 55.
 Colvin, Levi, 57.
 Comstock, Azariah, 21, 23.
 Comstock, Daniel, Jr., 21, 23.
 Comstock, David, 22, 28.
 Comstock, Gideon, 23.
 Cook, Benjamin, 23.
 Cooke, Henry, 4, 5.
 Cook, John, 14, 15.
 Cook, Samuel, 27, 28.
 Cook, Seth, 23.
 Cooper, Haggi, 46, 47.
 Cottrel, Stephen, Jr., 49.
 Covey, Hope, 25.
 Crandal, John, 35.
 Cutler, Beach, 47.

Darling, Daniel, Sr., 23.
 Darling, Daniel, Jr., 21, 23.
 Davis, James, 19.
 Dean, Joshua, 26.
 Delevan, Timothy, 33.
 Dennison, John, 30.
 Dexter, David, 41, 44.
 Dolzin, Forrest, 10.
 Drown, Solomon, 28.
 Dudley, Joseph, 2.
 Dunham, Daniel Jr., 39.
 Dusten, Samuel, 39.
 Dyre, William, 20.

Eddy, Caleb, 59, 60.
 Ellis, Stephen, 22.
 Ellison, 30.
 Eunis, Paul, 9.
 Fairfield, William, 18.
 Farrington, Benjamin, 40.
 Fencher (or Felcher, alias Casey), 59.
 Fenner, Arthur, 10.
 Fenner, Richard, 16.
 Field, Joseph, 50.

- Finney, Mary, 44.
Finney, Solomon, 41, 42, 44.
Fish, Simon, 48.
Fitch, Asa, 30.
Flood, Samuel, 13.
Fones, Capt., 24.
Fones, Daniel, 28.
Fowler, Christopher, 30, 31.
Franklin, Benjamin, 8.
Franklin, James, 8.

Gallaspy (or Gillespy), Hugh (alias Hugh Asper), 48.
Gardner, John, 31.
Gardner, Samuel, 48.
Gazell, Samuel, 46.
Gibins, Jonathan, 15.
Giles, Paul, 12.
Gold, John, 44.
Gouge, Benjamin, 12.
Goulding, George, 11, 13.
Greene, James, 58.
Greene, Thomas, 52, 63.
Greene, William, 20, 28, 35.
Greenman, Edward, 5, 64.
Greenman, Edward, Jr., 4, 5, 6, 64, 65.
Greenman, John, 4, 64.
Greenman, Silas, 5, 6, 64.
Gustine (or Gascoigne), Lemuel, 60, 61, 65.

Hale, Benoni, 48.
Hale, Richard, 36.
Hall, Charles, 31.
Hall, John, 34.
Hallet, Hannah, 8, 9.
Hallet, Samuel, 8, 9.
Hambleton, William, 11.
Harmson, 11.
Hart, Naphtali, 52.
Hastier, John, 13.
Hawkes, Jonathan, 24.
Hazey, Nathaniel, 23.
Hazard, Elizabeth, 18.
Hazard, George, 61.

Helme, Nathaniel, 48.
Hiams, William, 55.
Hopkins, Reuben, 16.
Hopkins, Stephen, 31, 57, 60.
Howard, Martin, 36, 37, 39.
Howard, William, 23.
Howe, Joshua, 55.
Howland, Daniel, 21.
Hoxsie, Samuel, 52, 55.
Hull, Joseph, 30, 31.
Hunt, Benjamin, 16.
Hunt, Daniel, 7, 33.
Hunt, John, 22.
Hunt, Peter, 36.
Hunt, Samuel, 21.
Hurlbutt, William, 27.
Hutchins, Dr., 30.
Hutton, William, 62, 63.

Ide, Ichabod, 36, 37, 38, 39.
Ide, John, 38.
Irons, Thomas, 16, 65.

Jackson, Daniel, 62.
Jenckes, Jeremiah, 41.
Jenkes, Nathan, 45.
Jenkes, Judge, 41.
Jones, Amasa, 55.
Jones, Isaac (alias Capt. Wright), 29.
Jones, Joseph, 5, 6.
Jones, Samuel, 47, 48.

Kamp, Nicholas, 7.
Kimball, Ebenezer, 43.
King, John, 34, 43, 44, 65.
Kinnie, Amos, 15.
Kinnie, Thomas, 15.

Lapham, 38.
Lapham, Joseph, 41.
Larabe, Willet, 29, 30, 31.
Law, Jonathan, 27.
Leffingwell, Lucy, 29, 30, 31.
Leonard, Robert, 50, 51.

- Lewis, Elisha, 46.
 Lindsey, Eleazer, 24.
 Lippencott, Freeloze, 4, 5.
 Lippencott, Robert, 4.
 Lopez, David, 52.
 Love, William, 59.
 Lovet, John, 38.
 Lumbard, Benjamin, 57, 58.
 Lundley, Thomas, 38.
 Luther, Elisha, 38.
 Lyndall, S., 36.
 Lyndon, Josias, 14.
 Lyndon, Josiah, Jr., 39.

 McNeal, Hopestill, 62.

 Manchester, Mr., 50.
 Manchester, Joseph, 63.
 Manchester, Thomas, 62.
 Martin, Bathsheba, 52.
 Martyn, Isaac, 12.
 Mason, John, 37.
 Mellony, Thomas, 14.
 Miller, Barnet, 36.
 Miller, Benjamin, 36, 40.
 Miller, Bernard, 36.
 Miller, Nathan, 37.
 Miller, Squire, 36.
 Mors (or Morse), Obadiah, 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22.
 Mors, Mrs. Obadiah, 19.
 Morse, Stephen, 63.
 Mortimore, William, 10.
 Mowry, Daniel, Jr., 63.
 Mowrey, John, 23.
 Moyran (alias Morton, alias Odell), Thomas, 2.
 Mumford, William, 36.
 Munroe, Joseph, 36, 37, 39, 40.

 Nash, Joseph, 58.
 Neal, Robert, 24, 64.
 Newman, Samuel, 38.
 Nichols, Benjamin, 63.
 Nichols, Jonathan, 40.
 Nichols, Kendal, 38.
 Nichols, Sarah, 38.
 Noble, Arthur, 7.

 Ollin, 50.
 Olney, John, 33.
 Ormsby, Jonathan, 41, 42.
 Otis, Joanna, 8.
 Otis, Jonathan, 32.
 Otis, Nicholas, 8.
 Ox, Samuel, 20.

 Paine, Stephen, 28, 29.
 Paine, William, 60.
 Payne, Widow, 37.
 Palmer, Cotton, 18.
 Palmer, Simeon, 18.
 Parker, Joseph, 12.
 Partridge, Richard, 19.
 Pearce, Benoni, 51.
 Pearce, Jabez, 50.
 Peck, Hannah, 7.
 Peck, Israel, 7.
 Peck, Nicholas, 7.
 Peckham, Benjamin, Jr., 18.
 Peckham, Sarah, 52.
 Pendleton, Joseph, 29.
 Pendock, Benoni, 53.
 Perry, Mary, 17.
 Philips, Azariah, 55.
 Phillips, Daniel, 28.
 Phillips, Israel, 21, 23.
 Pitkin, Samuel, 23.
 Pollock, 52.
 Potter, John, Jr., 17, 18, 19, 20, 21, 22, 64.
 Potter, John, Sr., 17.
 Potter, Sarah, 20.
 Potter, Stephen, 58.
 Potter, William, 18.
 Proud, William, 58.
 Pulman, Mary, 51.

 Quereau, Benjamin, 61.

- Randall, John, 16.
Randall, Jonathan, 29.
Randal, Zephariah, 50.
Rathbone, John, 3rd, 49.
Read, Joseph, 37.
Read, Joshua, 36, 37.
Read, William, 40.
Reynolds, Elisha, 56.
Reynolds, Henry, 48, 49, 50.
Reynolds, James, 52.
Reynolds, William, 49, 55, 56.
Rice, 26.
Richards, David, Jr., 8, 9.
Richards, David, Sr., 9.
Richardson, Jonathan, Jr., 23.
Richmond, Ezra, 32.
Richmond, William, 29.
Robinson, Alice (alias Alice Nossibar),
 26, 27.
Robinson, James, 20.
Robinson, Joseph, 26, 27.
Robinson, William, 27.
Rodman, Clark, 20.
Rogers, James, 41.
Rose, Stephen, 25.
Rosier, John, 34, 65.
Rupels, 36.
Rushbrook, Ovid, 6.
Russell, Joseph, 28.
Russell, Stephen, 26.
Russell, 36.

Sandford, David, 32.
Sayles, John, Jr., 33.
Scias, John, 26.
Scott, Edward, 39.
Scott, Joseph, 35, 37, 39.
Seagers, Shadrach, 34.
Sheffield, Ichabod, 18.
Sheffield, Jeremiah, 25.
Sheffield, Mary, 25.
Sheldon, Isaac, 25.
Sheldon, Nathanael, 12.
Sheldon, Samuel, 49.

Shippe, Thomas, Jr., 28.
Sisson, Gideon, 39.
Slocum, John, 32.
Smith, Abijah, 41.
Smith, Abraham, 44.
Smith, Elias, 33, 34.
Smith, Peter, 32.
Smith, Richard, 44, 45.
Smith, William Hooker, 61.
Spink, Alice, 16.
Spire, Dr., 30.
Stafford, Joseph, 47.
Stanton, 30.
Staples, Nathan, 23.
Staples, Samuel, 21, 22, 23.
Staples, Sarah, 40, 42, 44.
Stedman, Thomas?, 30.
Steel, Joseph, 13.
Stevens, Eliphalet, 46.
Stephens, Elkanah, 33.
Stephens, Joseph, 32, 34, 65.
Stephens, Nicholas, Jr., 32.
Stephens, Zephaniah, 32, 65.
Stowards, Elizabeth, 5.
Stratton, Richard, 41.
Streeter, Benjamin, 40.
Streeter, Ebenezer, 40, 41, 42.
Streeter, Enoch, 40, 41, 42.
Streeter, Joseph, 41.
Sturmey, Frederick, 34, 65.
Sullivan, Owen (alias John Pierson, alias
 Isaac Washington), 31, 32, 34, 35, 36, 37,
 38, 39, 40, 41, 42, 43, 44, 45, 46, 47, 48, 64.

Tabor, Josiah (alias Friday Still), 51.
Tallman, Mary, 21.
Tallman, Silas, 21.
Tallman, Stephen, 18, 20, 21, 65.
Taylor, George, 43, 59.
Thayer, Abner, 58.
Thayer, Cornelius, 13.
Thayer, David, 43, 44, 45.
Thayer, Jonathan, Jr., 23.
Thayer, Nathan, 43.

- Thayer, Uriah, 23.
Thomas, George, 31.
Thompson, Samuel, 21, 23.
Thornton, Titus, 12.
Throop, Amos, 60.
Thurber, Benjamin, 37, 46.
Thurber, 60.
Tillinghast, Nicholas, 50.
Tillinghast, 36, 37.
Tonkray (or Toneray), John, 55.
Topham, John, 35.
Tree, Richard, 47.
Trowbridge, Sheriff, 43.
Tuckerman, Isaac, 62.

Updike, Daniel, 43, 47.

Van Gelder, Abraham, 61.
Vaughan, Samuel, 5.
Vorce (or Force), Benjamin, 21, 23.

Wair, Elizabeth, 7.
Walcot, Moses, 40, 42.
Waldron, James, 42.
Waldron, John, 42.
Walling, Daniel, 27, 28.
Wanton, Joseph, 13, 56.
Ward, Richard, 20.
Warner, Ezekiel, 16.
Waterman, Resolved, 45, 47.
Waterman, Richard, 10.
Waters, David, 27.
Watson, Jeffrey, 48.
Webb, John, 10, 11.
Weight, John, 49.

West, Thomas, 46, 47.
Wheaton, John, 43.
Wheeler, Glazier, 55.
Wheeler, Philip, 33.
Whipple, Ephraim, 33, 45.
Whipple, Jeremiah, 44.
White, Benoni, 2.
White, Peregrine, 2.
White, Peregrine, Jr., 2.
White, Nathaniel, 33.
White, Samuel, 32.
Whiting, Timothy, 14.
Whittaker, Philip, 43.
Wigner, Norbert, 19.
Wigner, Stephen, 19, 20.
Wiley, Jacob, 33, 64.
Wilkinson, Benjamin, 15, 16.
Wilkinson, David, 62.
Wilkinson, Joseph, 16.
Wilkinson, Mary, 16.
Williams, Ensign, 30.
Williams, Mrs., 30.
Williams, Roger, 2.
Williams, Silas, 16.
Wills, 61.
Wilson, Samuel, 55, 56.
Winn, Benjamin, 39, 40.
Winslow, Edward, 6.
Wolcott, John, 26.
Wood, Silas, 53.
Woodbury, Hugh, 14.
Woodward, Freeloove, 58.
Woodward, Jacob, 58, 59, 60, 62.
Wright, Samuel, Jr., 40, 41.
Wyman, James, 43.

GEOGRAPHICAL INDEX

- Albany County (N. Y.), 57.
 Andover (Mass.), 12, 13.
 Barnstable (Mass.), 48.
 Bellingham (Mass.), 21, 22.
 Beverly (Mass.), 14.
 Bolton (Conn.), 30.
 Boston (Mass.), 2, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 14, 17, 22, 24, 26, 31, 34.
 Bristol (R. I.), 7, 28, 36, 46.
 Bristol County (Mass.), 32, 36.
 Bristol County (R. I.), 40.
 Canterbury (Conn.), 38.
 Charlestown (Mass.), 43.
 Charleston (= Charlestown, R. I.), 25.
 Chabaco (Mass.), 12.
 Connecticut, 3, 4, 5, 6, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 16, 18, 20, 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, 28, 29, 30, 32, 34, 35, 40, 43, 48, 49, 54, 57, 59, 61.
 Coventry (R. I.), 53, 59.
 Cumberland (R. I.), 37, 38, 40, 41, 42, 44.
 Dedham (Mass.), 41.
 Dighton (Mass.), 32, 34, 42.
 Dover (N. H.), 12.
 Dover (N. Y.), 33, 38, 47.
 Dutchess County (N. Y.), 15, 32, 35, 46, 47.
 East Greenwich (R. I.), 47, 53, 62.
 England, 4, 14.
 Essex County (Mass.), 12, 26.
 Exeter (R. I.), 40, 41, 48, 49, 51, 54.
 Fairfield (Conn.), 46.
 Fairfield (County Conn.), 46.
 Fort George, 40.
 Germany, 14.
 Gloucester (R. I.), 12, 21, 27, 28, 33, 44, 51.
 Great Barrington (Mass.), 57.
 Groton (Conn.), 29, 30.
 Hartford (Conn.), 23.
 Haverhill (Mass.), 39.
 Hispaniola, 59.
 Ipswich (Mass.), 11, 13.
 Ireland, 14, 31, 64.
 Jamaica, 27.
 Johnston (R. I.), 60, 61.
 Kent County (R. I.), 47, 48, 49, 53.
 Killingly (Conn.), 26.
 King's County (R. I.), 25, 31, 40, 47, 49, 56.
 Kingstown (R. I.), 5, 26.
 Little Rest (R. I.), 55.
 London (Eng.), 19, 24.
 Long Island (N. Y.), 29.
 Lynn (Mass.), 22, 23, 24.
 Mackerel Cove (R. I.), 60.
 Marblehead (Mass.), 11.
 Marlborough (Mass.), 26.
 Massachusetts, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10, 11, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 22, 27, 28, 29, 31, 34, 42, 43, 48, 55, 57.
 Mendon (Mass.), 21, 22, 34, 35, 38, 43.
 Middletown (Conn.), 48.
 Middletown (R. I.), 13, 57.
 Nantucket (Mass.), 60.
 Narragansett (R. I.), 15, 46.
 Newark (N. J.), 15.
 New Hampshire, 3, 10, 11, 13, 28, 29, 30, 31, 33, 34, 35, 38, 39, 40, 43, 49.
 New Haven (Conn.), 27.
 New Jersey (or Jerseys), 15, 57.

- New London (Conn.), 9, 21.
 New London County (Conn.), 15, 29.
 Newport (R. I.), 2, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 12,
 12, 14, 15, 17, 18, 19, 22, 25, 27, 30, 32,
 34, 35, 37, 38, 39, 40, 41, 45, 51, 52, 60,
 61, 63.
 Newport County (R. I.), 35, 39, 40.
 New York (City), 13, 15, 31, 49, 54, 61, 65.
 New York (Province), 21, 22, 27, 30, 32,
 33, 35, 46, 47, 54, 57, 58, 59, 61.
 North Carolina, 54, 58, 59, 60.
 North Kingstown (R. I.), 17, 28.
 North Providence (R. I.), 58, 60.
 Norwalk (Conn.), 32.
 Norwich (Conn.), 29, 30.
 Nottingham West (N. H.), 39.

 Oblong (N. Y.), 15, 22, 27.

 Philadelphia (Pa.), 2, 49, 54.
 Portsmouth (N. H.), 11, 13, 39.
 Portsmouth (R. I.), 20.
 Preston (Conn.), 14, 15, 30, 34.
 Providence (R. I.), 10, 11, 16, 22, 23, 26,
 27, 28, 31, 33, 34, 36, 37, 38, 40, 41, 42,
 43, 44, 45, 46, 50, 53, 54, 57, 58, 59, 60,
 61, 62, 63.
 Providence County (R. I.), 12, 15, 27, 31,
 33, 40, 44, 45, 46, 50, 53, 61.

 Rehoboth (Mass.), 7, 36, 37, 38, 39.

 Rhode Island, 1, 2, 3, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11,
 12, 13, 14, 15, 16, 17, 18, 21, 22, 23, 24,
 25, 26, 27, 28, 29, 31, 32, 34, 35, 38, 39,
 40, 41, 43, 44, 47, 48, 49, 50, 51, 54, 55,
 62, 64, 65.

 Sag Harbor (Long Island, N. Y.), 29.
 Salem (Mass.), 10, 11, 12, 22, 24, 26, 64.
 Scituate (R. I.), 15, 16, 45, 57, 60.
 Smithfield (R. I.), 17, 21, 23, 28, 33, 44,
 45, 47, 58.
 South Kingstown (R. I.), 18, 19, 25, 29,
 30, 35, 48, 52.
 Spencer Town (Spencertown, N. Y.),
 59.
 Springfield (Mass.), 6, 11, 28, 64.
 Stonington (Conn.), 6, 30.
 Suffolk County (Mass.), 34, 42.
 Swansea (Mass.), 36, 37.

 Tiverton (R. I.), 35.
 Tower Hill (S. Kingstown, R. I.), 30, 55,
 56.

 Uxbridge (Mass.), 23.

 Wallingford (Conn.), 34.
 Warren (R. I.), 36, 37, 38, 40.
 Warwick (R. I.), 47, 52.
 Watertown (Mass.), 10.
 Wells (Me.), 10, 12.
 Westerly (R. I.), 25, 29.
 West Greenwich (R. I.), 48, 49, 52.
 West Indies, 57.
 Windham County (Conn.), 26, 33.
 Woburn (Mass.), 43.
 Woodstock (Conn.), 33, 35.
 Woonsocket Falls (R. I.), 43.
 Worcester (Mass.), 27, 38.
 Wrentham (Mass.), 40, 42.

 York (Me.), 24.
 York County (Me.), 10.



University of
Connecticut
Libraries
